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CRASH
ZX SPECTRUM

ISSUE 47 DECEMBER 1987

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THE GREAT ESCAPE
The year is 1942, the place Germany. War has broken out and you have been captured and placed in a high security P.O.W. camp. Victory may be far away, so it is your duty to escape, but this will not be easy. It will take careful planning and much patience, culminating in a skilful and resourceful implementation. In the camp you are closely guarded but while you follow the daily routine you will need to slip away unnoticed to reconnoitre the situation and collect tools and materials necessary for your chosen escape route. There are many avenues of escape, some difficult, all certainly dangerous and each one requiring different skills or equipment.
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YOUR SPECTRUM – RIGHT OR WRONG?

JUDGING from a few of the letters Lloyd Mangram receives, you'd think Spectrum-owners were old ladies. And I'm not talking about the (sometimes justifiably) shocked-and-appalled mothers, either: it's the die-hard rubber-key recidivists of 1983, all fully paid-up members of the Society For The Preservation Of *Paradroids*, all bemoaning a Spectrum world they perceive as dominated by slick, gameplayless licences (hallo Robin Candy – your tie-ins feature starts page 34) and slick, faceless corporate combines (hallo Newsfield).

Well, times have changed (wasn't *Platitudes* some early *Paradroids* variant?). And since so much of CRASH this Christmas is devoted to a massive comprehensive look back – not just the mandatory Lloyd's Lookback, but also the last two parts of that CRASH History, a complete CRASH index, more on the history of tie-ins and what have you – let's look forward, too. After all, the future belongs to us and the past is a foreign country. (The old sayings are the best ones, I think, but we can't stand in the way of progress; we're all children at heart, and boys will be boys, sure as rain is rain!)

Those licences: the editorial in CRASH Issue 37 guessed that 'this year is going to be dominated by film tie-ins and licensed versions of arcade games'. Implication: whither the game when the the name is bound to sell it?

Well, Robin Candy's feature is a bit down on film tie-ins in general, perhaps because even Archimedes graphics will never equal the thrill of the Sensurround and the slurp of the Coke. But he does pull out Ocean's *Cobra* and *Top Gun*, both from this year, as two of the best – sheer gameplay, not gimmickry on a big-name bandwagon.

And though there's no big film licence this month apart from the insipid American version of Electric Dreams's *Aliens*, a couple of cartoon tie-ins do well: Piranha's *Through The Trap Door*, and *Basil The Great Mouse Detective* from Gremlin Graphics.

The point is that tie-ins are not a priori bad, and the apparent triumph of the tie-in this year is down to a couple of factors.

First, games are feeding more and more from the mainstream of entertainment and therefore flowing more and more back into the mainstream.

Today every entertainment release – film, book, TV series, album, toy – is tied in with as many other things as possible, to extract the maximum sales from a single well-known name. So, as Robin Candy observes, the computer-game tie-in is a natural part of any major film's marketing now, and perhaps one day they'll be making the film of the game.

The second factor is that only full-price labels can afford to produce major tie-ins (and, more cynically, one imagines the market will pay more for a name tie-in than an unheard-of original game anyway). So while the budget labels produce so many straightforward games for the whatever-'em-up fans, full-pricers like Piranha, which make more money from each of their fewer titles, can afford to concentrate resources on complex tie-ins, simulations (tie-ins with real life!) and arcade conversions – and produce proportionately more of them than they used to.

The budget houses, particularly Code Masters, produce a huge number of nondescript games, often passable, rarely noteworthy, which they know will sell because they're cheap and there are so many Spectrum-owners to buy them.

That takes care of the casual end of the market. More full-price software houses may be moving into it for quick quids – viz Hewson's £2.99 Rack-It label, the Virgin group's recent purchase of 45% of original budgeteers Mastertronic – but they're not abandoning full-price games.

No, the full-price games might be few and far between – but they're going to get better, because software houses still attuned to 8-bit know that otherwise they'll lose their Spectrum market to 16-bit, or even worse to the dedicated consoles, which are almost a closed market to most software producers.

And after all, there's *The Sentinel*. There's *Driller*. The Amiga 500 ad may claim 'now other home computers are just toys', but the signs are that the toys are growing up fast and Spectrum software is staying in the entertainment business.

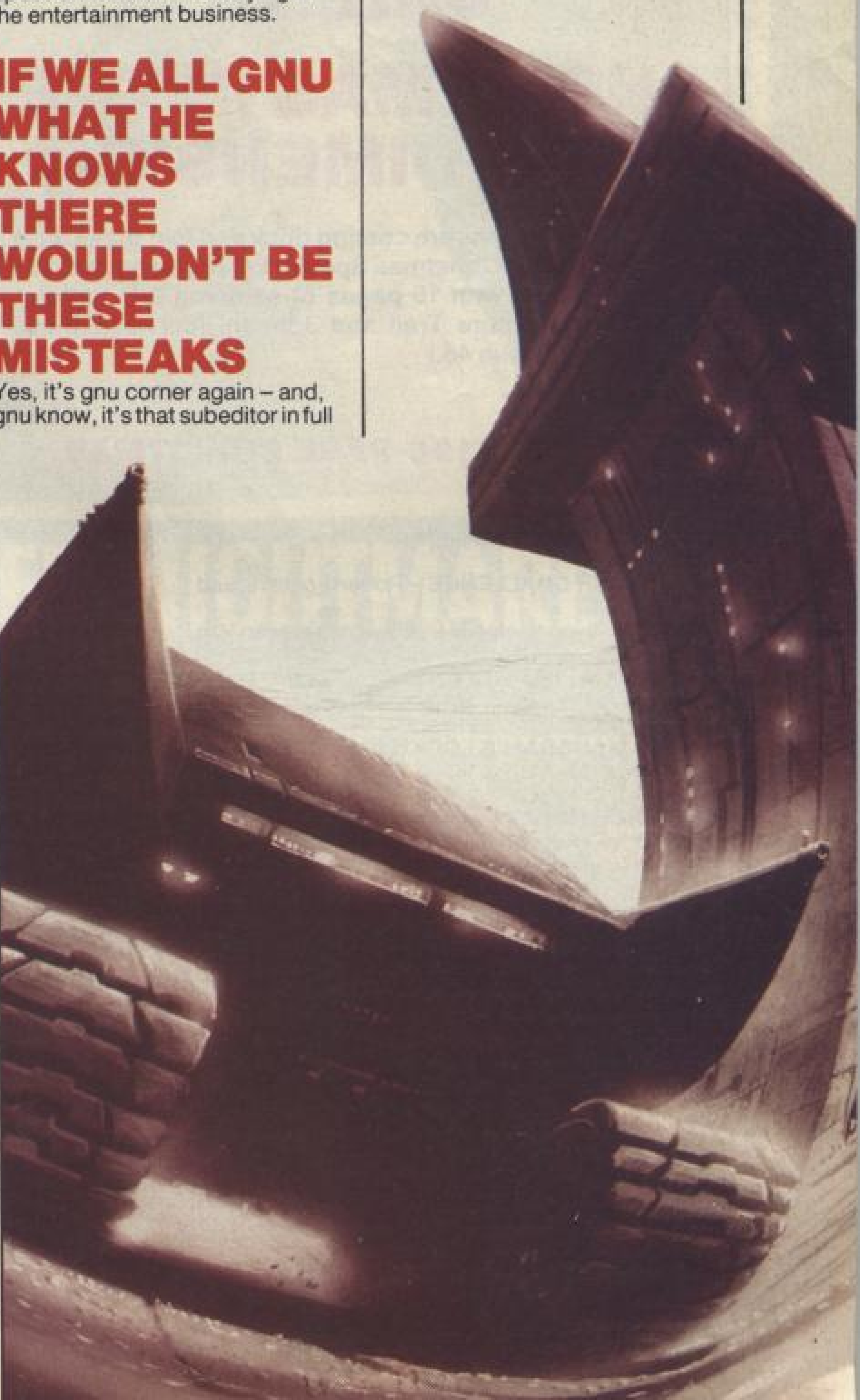
IF WE ALL GNU WHAT HE KNOWS THERE WOULDN'T BE THESE MISTEAKS

Yes, it's gnu corner again – and, gnu know, it's that subeditor in full (at last), the one we pleaded for in Issue 45. **David Peters** comes to Ludlow from the big city – well, Telford – to correct the reviewers' worst excesses.

Speaking of our worst excesses, which perhaps I shouldn't do in a family magazine (those shocked-and-appalled ones again!), I feel like an excessory after the fact reporting these three.

First: last issue's *PCW* Show report omitted **Andrew Whittaker** from the list of members of Graftgold, the programming team signed to Telecomsoft amid contractual controversy. We shouldn't believe everything we read in news releases.

Second: last issue's review of *The Fast And The Furious* from ▶



GO! (released on a tape with *Thunderceptor*) didn't have a percentage box. Ah, those technical reasons! Here it is, anyway:

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS

Presentation	72%
Graphics	70%
Playability	66%
Addictive qualities	63%
OVERALL	**63%**

Third: **Jon North**'s Speedlock loader on page 57 does not work. (You might guess this upon opening the page.)

He'd sent it in to Playing Tips and it had been accepted in good faith, coming from a trusted and prolific tipster; then (when the page was in the box on its way to the printers – we only just saved it) Jon sent in a new version because he'd noticed the original doesn't work.

In fact, it's such a complete nonstarter that we've had to print the whole thing again on page 134, wasting half a page and no doubt causing Jon (not to mention Nick Roberts) a lot of embarrassment.

Nick tries to test everything that's printed in Playing Tips, but with an expanding section and the usual duties of reviews, Challenges etc he doesn't always have the time. So please double-check your own tips and POKEs before they go in the post (later corrections can get lost in systems) – it saves everyone from editor to reader a lot of trouble.

That's it for a fortnight – stay multidimensional.

BARNABY PAGE

IN THE NEXT CRASH

CHRISTMAS IN THE THIRD DIMENSION

The new dimensions are coming thick and fast these days – but the CRASH Christmas Special takes you back to the third dimension with 16 pages of stunning 3-D fantasy, including Adventure Trail and Jetman! (So keep those glasses from Issue 46.)

ALSO IN THE 196-PAGE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL . . .

PLAYING TIPS – more pages!

THE CRASH CHALLENGE – Roberts gets nicked

SCORES – high scores like you've never seen 'em

THE CRASH HISTORY *continues gracefully with 1986 and 1987 – two action-packed years with 24 CRASH covers to match!*

LLOYD MANGRAM'S LOOKBACK – that 1987 in full, but that extra bit *more* in full

THE CRASH INDEX – for those of you with interests in high-powered magnification, a complete index of EVERY game EVER reviewed in CRASH (complete with percentages)

FOCUS ON FANZINES – a Fanzine File for editors and editors-to-be with hints to spruce it up – plus **GOING TO BED WITH CRASH**, the inside story on how it happens here

CRASH COURSE – we luvv skool

VOTE IN THE READERS' AWARDS

£££ IN COMPS — REVIEWS! — ET AL

PLUS: news previewing a classified forum for technically playing compilations of adventurous strategy coin-ops on the screen by mail and modem, all in CRASH Issue 49, on sale Thursday December 10

REVIEWS

December's highlights

SMASHED!

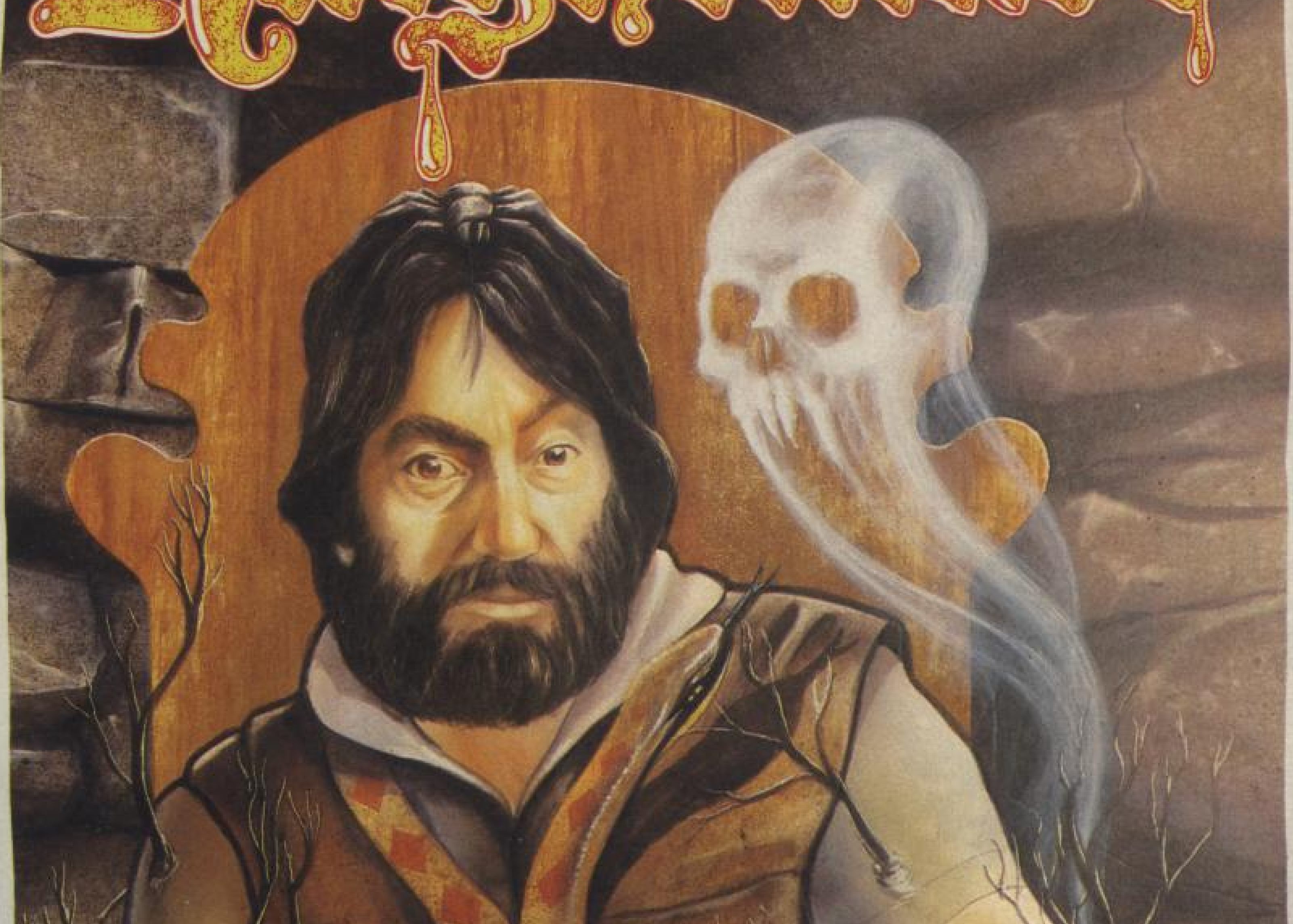
HOTSHOTS 80% and over . . .

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DARK SCEPTRE

Producer: **Beyond**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Mike Singleton, David Gautrey, Alan Jardine**

The Northlanders are unwelcome visitors in the Islands Of The Western Sea. The King Of The Isles is set on revenge and orders a fearsome sceptre to be wrought – but the King himself is struck down, and his enemies gain the very power with which he sought to destroy them.

So the sceptre must be found and destroyed, in this graphic adventure based on programmer Mike Singleton's own play-by-mail game.

You have command of a warrior band that seeks the eponymous evil sceptre. The Red Shadow Lords are your deadly adversaries and must be overwhelmed at all cost. You can enlist the help of other fighting companies; but they're neutral at first, and even after taking your side are liable to desert you.

Each character has one of eight different personalities, which makes him suited to certain tasks and not to others.

Your warriors are controlled by commands from a set which includes kill, protect, defend, seek, bewitch and petrify. Each fighter can be given several orders at once, to be carried out in sequence.

But once an order has been issued you have no control over a warrior's actions, and he'll act independently during unexpected encounters.

You can watch any warrior in action, and hear the clashing swords. When one of your warriors is fighting an enemy, others may line up waiting to fight your warrior.

A scan option provides a scrolling overview of the land through which your quest takes place.

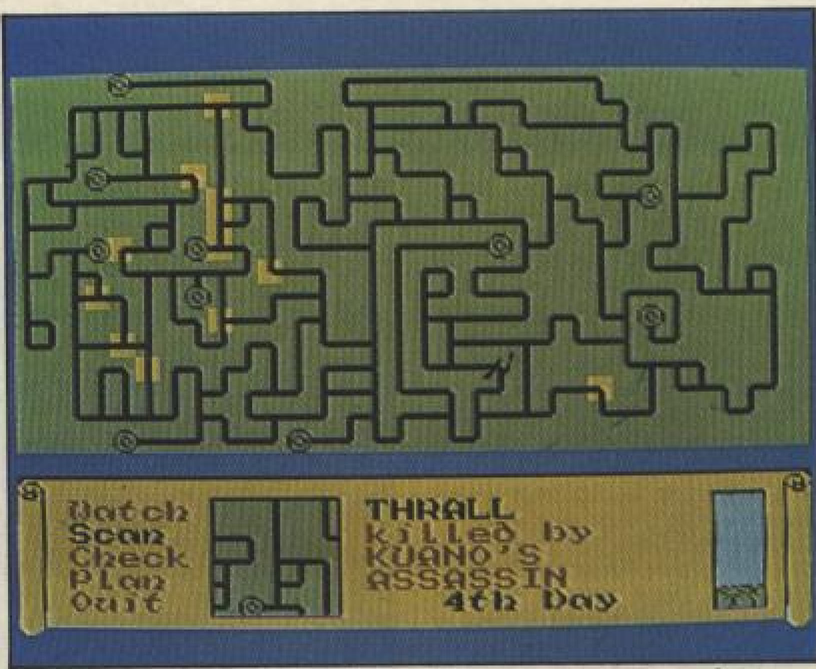
Dark Sceptre has been eagerly awaited after the success of programmer Mike Singleton's *Lords Of Midnight* (Smashed in Issue 7) and *Doomdark's Revenge* (an Issue 13 Smash; both earned ten out of ten on the first CRASH rating system!).

A sequel to them, *Eye Of The Moon*, is promised. But it's taken Singleton more than a year to develop *Dark Sceptre*, and not even he can complete it in less than 17 days . . . yet.

ROBIN

" Dark Sceptre **is quite a departure from Mike Singleton's** Doomdark's Revenge **and** Lords Of Midnight**, of which I'm a big fan – but it's another engrossing Singleton game. And here he uses an ingenious masking technique to get past attribute clash. The warriors walk and fight convincingly. But the lack of detailed instructions is frustrating, and much time is spent discovering the object of the game and who's best to befriend. Still, if you can put up with this,** Dark Sceptre **becomes rewarding. "**

85%



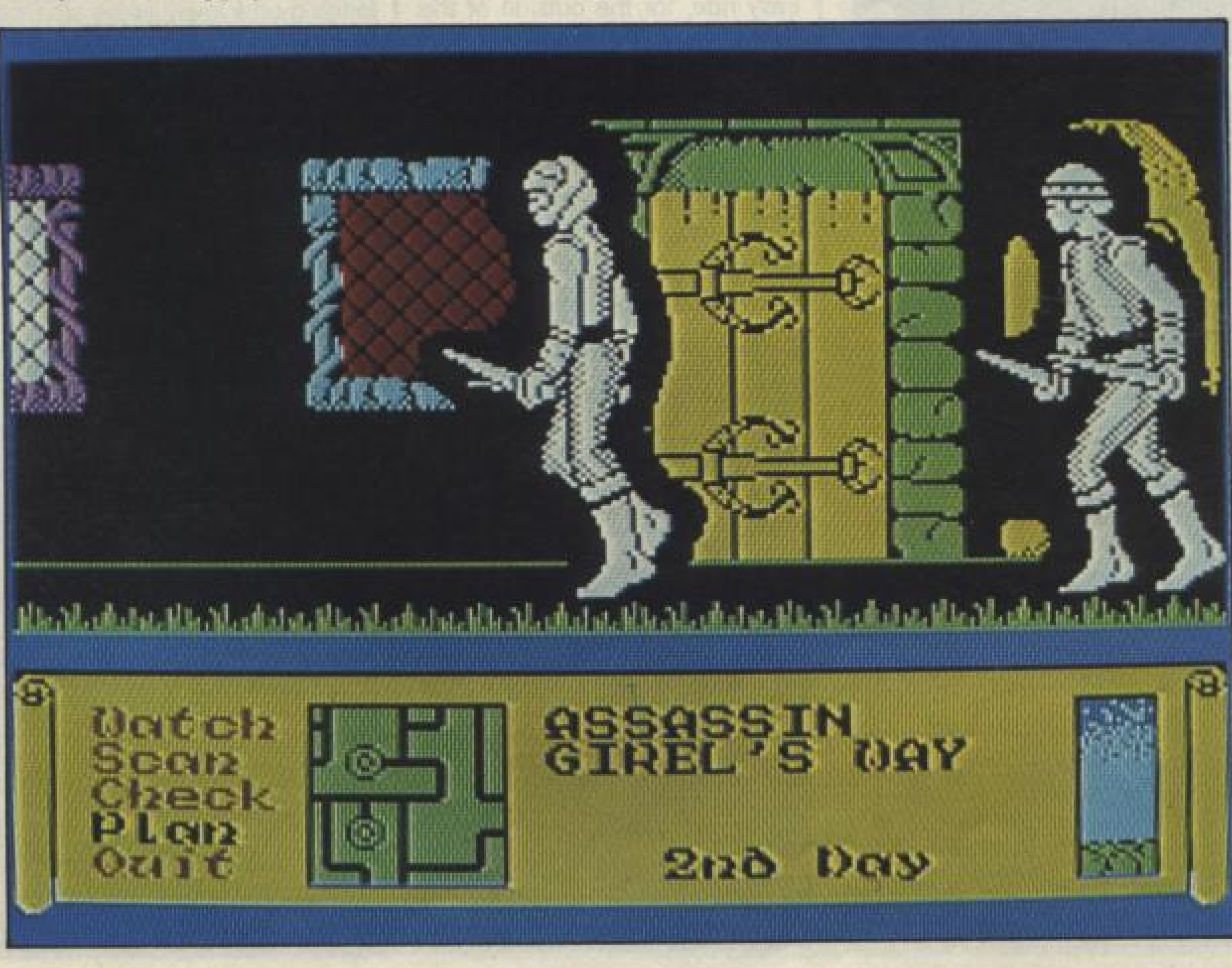
▶ **A scan option shows the land through which your quest takes place**

MIKE

" Dark Sceptre **is quite something! The graphics are huge, well-animated and excellently coloured, and the gameplay is complex: it took me a good while to get to grips with things. When you can play for hours and not double back on yourself you start feeling you've got the hang of it. The presentation is very good, too. "**

95%

▶ **Depth and striking graphics add** ***Dark Sceptre*** **to Mike Singleton's successes**



NICK

" Like all Mike Singleton's games, Dark Sceptre **has outstanding graphics. The main character and backgrounds are excellently drawn and animated, and colour clash doesn't seem to exist in Mike's mind; all the characters' shapes are similar, but the colour of their heads and hats keeps changing. Sound is used well.** Dark Sceptre **is another fantastic addition to Mike Singleton's list of hits. "**

84%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: superbly-animated large characters
Sound: basic, but effective, spot effects
General rating: very playable and an outstanding programming achievement

Presentation	87%
Graphics	89%
Playability	82%
Addictive qualities	90%
OVERALL	**88%**

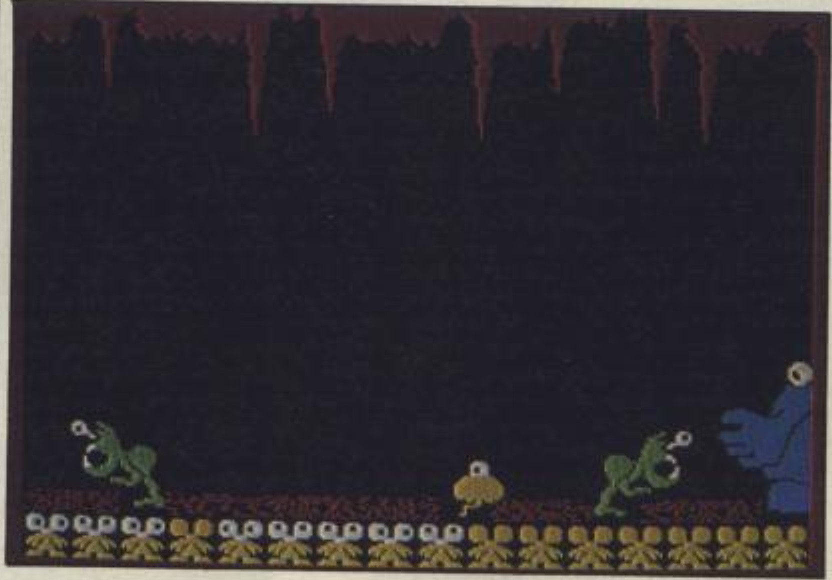
THROUGH THE TRAP DOOR

Producer: **Piranha**
Retail price: **£8.95**
Author: **Don Priestley**

It's back – the *Trap Door* TV series, now showing every Saturday morning on *Number 73*. Collins is publishing the books, Channel 5 is releasing the video and (for our obsessive readers) 'Merit Toys launch the *Trap Door* bus with Berk driving his monster friends'. Hey!

And Berk, the blue cartoon cutie, is back in Piranha's *Through The Trap Door*, sequel to *Trap Door* (which earned 88% Overall in Issue 33, just over a year ago).

Berk and Drut are coloured thingummywotsits, searching for Boni the skull (he's been snatched by a kleptomaniac bat) through a series of subterranean worlds. They have to find the key in each one before they can go on to the next – and when they've reached the region beneath the earth, Berk and Drut can find Boni and take him back through the trap door.



► *Through The Trap Door*: **more froglets than gameplay**

Berk can carry Drut, a hopping froglet, in his chubby arms, but first he has to catch him. Fuelled by his passion for the worms that appear everywhere, Drut is always running off – but in some sections of the underground rooms, invisible Drutmarkers can control him.

You can switch control from Berk to Drut, thus using the frog's hopping powers to retrieve keys. If Berk gets into difficulties attempting to reach a key, Drut can push it to a safer position.

Falling stalactites, great Berkswallowers which rise from the ground, ceiling drips, bats and ghosts all occupy this basement environment. But it's not all bad – forgetful tourists have left behind sweets and sausages, which can be used to keep Berk's great bulk sustained. Other items, such as a Pooter and a hefty weight, can also be helpful in the quest for the keys.

If either Berk or Drut attempts to pass through an unlocked door, or if Berk goes through without Drut, or if Berk fails to pick up Boni, you lose, and have to start back at square one. It's a jungle down there.

Programmer Don Priestley did

PAUL

" I didn't like Don Priestley's Flunky **much, but I found** Through The Trap Door **very addictive and lots of fun. The graphics work well and their function isn't hampered by the technique, as happened in** Flunky**; the problems are quite logical, and having control of two characters adds interest. This is much more playable than** Trap Door**, though perhaps Don Priestley could find a new technique sometime . . . "**

84%

NICK

" Large graphics and cuddly characters make Through The Trap Door **look very, but the game itself is of no real interest. As in all Don Priestley's games, the graphics look good but their slumping around the screen soon gets irritating; the best thing here is when worms and slugs pop up out of the ground to have a little squirm.** Through The Trap Door **is very attractive, but there's not enough to do. "**

52%

NEBULUS

Producer: **Hewson**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Author: **John M Phillips**

Rising from the waters are mysterious stone towers, poking like fingers into the eye of the sky – and Pogo, a corpulent bug-eyed biped, is determined to reach the top of each.

So he uses a series of steps and platform lifts around the outside of the towers. As he toddles and leaps to the left and right, the tower rotates ('rotational 3-D scrolling', says Hewson) to reveal further steps, dead ends and doorways. By passing through these portals, Pogo can appear on the other side of the tower to take another flight of stairs.

But Pogo's progress isn't an easy ride, for the outside of this columnar construction is populated by bobbing balls, energetic eyes, and rotating stars, not to mention the occasional slippery step. A bubble gun solves some problems, but nobody thought to give Pogo a bucket of sand.

If Pogo tumbles to the base of the tower and lands in the choppy sea, one of his three lives is lost; but if he takes only a slight fall, landing on a lower stone step, he loses only time (there's a time limit) and can begin his ascent again.

Pogo gathers points by the pocketful as he ascends to higher levels, and if he's successful on one set of steps he can move on to conquer the next tower . . . just because it's there.

ROBIN

" This is as original as programmer John Phillips's last game, Impossaball **(89% Overall in Issue 37).** Nebulus **is essentially a maze variant, but more complex than that description suggests – and it's one of those delightful games that's more or less instantly playable, without complex instructions and banks of controls. You'll keep coming back for more. The title tune is well above average. "**

85%

MIKE

" Though it would benefit from a bit more colour, Nebulus **is one of the cutest things around on the Spectrum, rivalled only by Berk in** Through The Trap Door **(also reviewed this issue)! The idea of the revolving tower is original, and what's more it works. It's addictive and has far more playability than you'd expect from a game that's fairly simple. The title music is good, too. "**

86%

► *Nebulus*: **intricate, attractive graphics . . . but how much depth?**



MIKE

"**The TV characters are represented brilliantly; they're easily recognisable and quite accurate too. There's loads of colour, and the masking technique is used effectively. But the game might wane after a week or two. Still, it's worth buying if you're a fan of the programme.**"

73%

the original *Trap Door*, and his recent credits include Piranha's *Flunky* (60% Overall in Issue 44).

COMMENTS

Joystick: Kempston
Graphics: large, colourful, cute; and some of the fastest Don Priestley-style graphics to date
Sound: very little – a serious flaw
General rating: another superb adaptation of the TV series, though its appeal comes from graphics more than addictive gameplay

Presentation	83%
Graphics	81%
Playability	66%
Addictive qualities	63%
OVERALL	**70%**

NICK

"Nebulus **has some fantastic graphics, like Hewson's recent games** Exolon **and** Zynaps, **and there's a lovely blue sea at the base of the tower. Some levels are really fun, too, and the music is brilliant.**"

83%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: the intricately detailed towers create a strong 3-D effect; beautifully-drawn characters; monochromatic
Sound: excellent title tune, in-game effects
General rating: beautiful, playable, original and very simple

Presentation	77%
Graphics	88%
Playability	86%
Addictive qualities	85%
OVERALL	**85%**

SCRABBLE DE LUXE

Producer: **Leisure Genius**
Retail price: **£10.95 (cassette), £15.95 (disk)**
Authors: **Sentient Software**

This is the 128K version of Psion's 48K *Scrabble* – released before CRASH appeared, but covered in Lloyd Mangram's Issue Four Living Guide!

Scrabble De Luxe is based very closely on the board game, where players pick letters at random and try to form words with them, earning extra points for using difficult letters.

In this Spectrum version, two, three or four can play, each starting off with seven letters displayed in a rack. With these, the players have to form words vertically or horizontally on the *Scrabble* board.

MIKE

"**If you're not into word games there's no way you'll go for this, but there is a mental challenge which makes it worth considering.**"

75%

The chosen word is typed, and the cursor positions it on the board. When a word is in position its score is calculated, but if it's not in the computer's 20,000-word vocabulary, that turn is challenged. This challenge can be accepted by the player, in which case the turn and its score are lost.

But if the player rejects the challenge, the computer accepts the word, and any other word generated from it.

As in the board game, there's a set score for each letter, and the score for a word is the total for all the letters. However, placing letters on certain squares on the grid boosts the player's score.

The computer can help each player by suggesting words which can be made with a player's selection of letters, and can also point out where they would fit on the grid.

And you can choose to play against the computer itself. Its thinking process can be called up on screen, so that the human player is not totally out of depth in taking on the electronic megabrain.

PAUL

"**This is one of the most mathematically clever games I've played in a long time – if you don't believe me try putting the computer in a really difficult position and see how fast it gets out of it! The memory used must be immense (even on a 128) – every word you can think of is there. Even when playing the computer at very low levels the HELP option comes in useful and is surprisingly fast. Still, I would have thought computer** Scrabble De Luxe **could have a few more than two colours on the screen. It's the ideal game to keep everyone quiet over the Christmas period – and the best thing about it is that everyone can play at their own level.**"

73%

NICK

"**First came the fantastic board game, then the not-so-fantastic (though nicely-presented and colourful) Spectrum game from Psion, and now** Scrabble De Luxe **is just another version of the board game. There's hardly any colour and what there is is very dull; the controls are confusing, to.**"

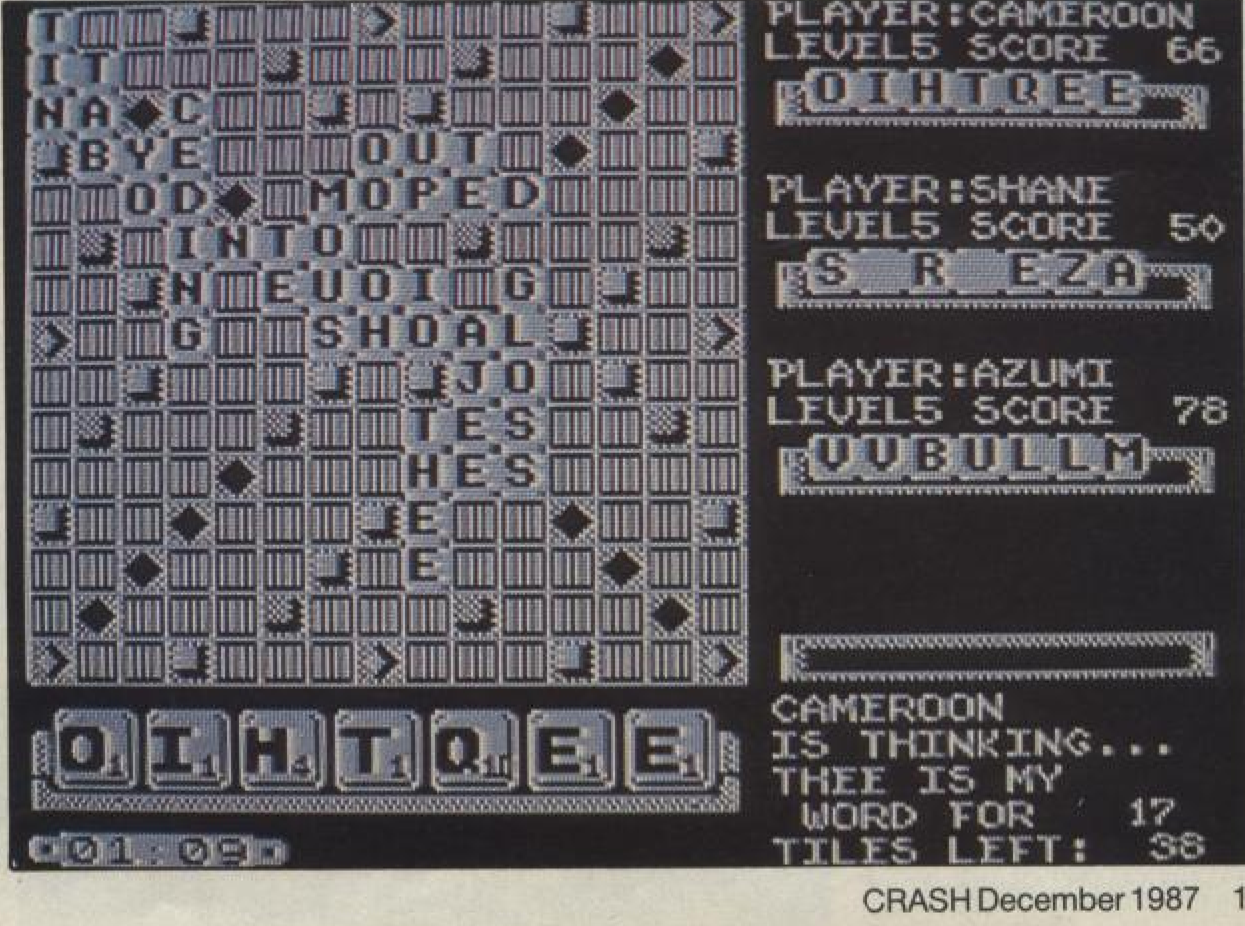
37%

COMMENTS

Joystick: Cursor
Graphics: monochromatic
Sound: virtually none
Options: eight skill levels, with the computer using more obscure words at higher levels
General rating: well, it's *Scrabble* . . .

Presentation	64%
Graphics	45%
Playability	65%
Addictive qualities	61%
OVERALL	**62%**

▶ Putting two words together





ALIENS (US VERSION)

Producer: **Electric Dreams**
Retail price: **£9.99**
Authors: **Steve Cartwright, Glyn Anderson, Peter Kaminski and Gene Smith**

In the beginning there was just one . . . now there are many. Director Ridley Scott's 1979 hit film *Alien*, acclaimed for the intense spookiness of its dark, atmospheric scenes ('In space, no one can hear you scream!'), spawned a game in 1985: Argus Press Software's tricky *Alien*, on the Mind Games label, was a CRASH Smash in Issue 15.

Last year, the screen sequel arrived; some say it surpasses the terror of the original. And a game of *Aliens* soon came from Electric Dreams and Mark Eyles (designer of another film tie-in, *Back To The Future*.) It earned 84% Overall in CRASH Issue 37.

Both films are now on video, and the aliens keep on coming on computer too. The US *Aliens* tie-in is quite different from the UK version reviewed earlier this year; the latter was a straightforward arcade adventure with horizontally-scrolling graphics, pitting the player against a horde of aliens in a series of rooms.

CRASH reviewers found the US version, presented in bird's-eye view, more complex, with more of the film's scenario – though the UK version's graphics, they say, came closer to the film.

In the US *Aliens* you take the role of Ripley, a survivor from *Alien* who returns with four space marines to the planet of that first confrontation, LV-426, now known as Acheron.

There are six distinct parts. First, a small drop ship takes Ripley and her crack team down through a tortuous wormhole to the planet's surface. An indicator helps you keep the ship's approach exact, because the wrong trajectory can lead to an aborted landing.

Once on the planet's surface, the four marines (who know how to blast the guts out of anything) go to the planet's atmosphere processor plant. But there they are found by aliens, and may not make it back to the safety of their armoured personnel carrier. This is the second part.

Only one marine can be controlled at a time, and his name is displayed beneath the peripheral-vision motion tracker which displays nearby alien activity. Individual screens indicate, by colour and movement, the life status and safety level of *each* marine.

Aliens appear with increasing frequency, and any marine too slow to escape or blast his way to freedom is lost unless another marine can be brought to his aid. When two marines are onscreen, both are safe.

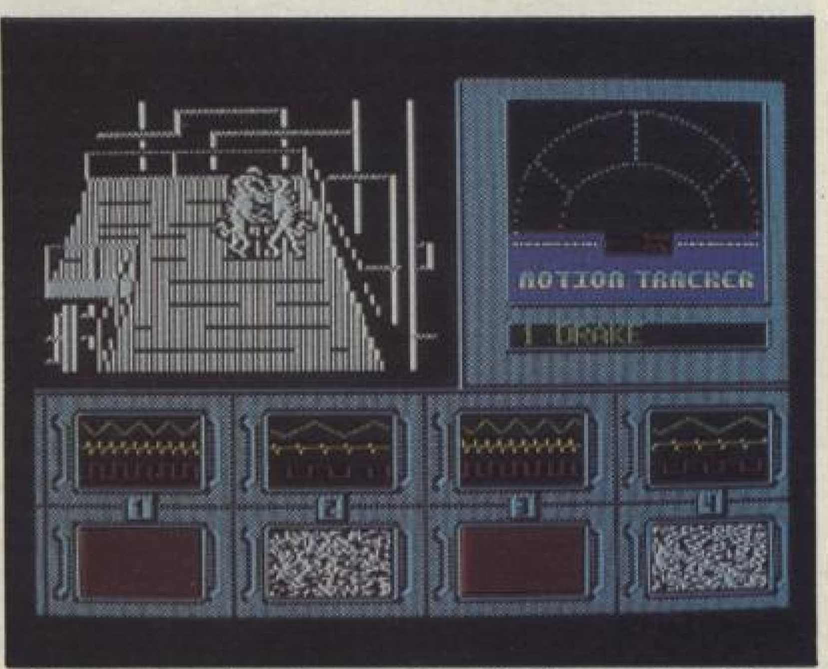
Now comes the third part. In the operations room, you are faced with an onrush of foul aliens intent upon getting past Ripley. But her powerful flame-thrower can burn an enemy's body, or at least keep it at bay. Eventually, though, Ripley will have to carve a hole in the thick metal door and enter a maze of air ducts for the fourth part.

This tortuous tunnelwork takes Ripley and her remaining force toward the drop craft. An overhead map traces the complexities of the duct, showing the position of Ripley – and the exit. But the aliens will try to stop the humans, shadowing the movements of Ripley as she flees.

Her problems are added to by Newt, a small girl from the planet's community of human colonists – and easy prey for any slavering alien's jaws as she roams the processor. Ripley has just 17 minutes to rescue Newt before the processor blows up, sending all of Acheron to oblivion.

In this fifth part, Ripley can use a range locator which indicates Newt's proximity, and flares to mark her course. Once found, the terrified child follows her rescuer back to the processor's elevator. If time has not run out, Ripley can return to the craft and blast off.

But as the craft moves through space an alien, queen of all her race, clings to the spaceship's outer skin. When the Queen is discovered back at the spacebase, Ripley slips into something more comfortable – an exoskeleton with power-loader arms. And in the sixth and final part of *Aliens*, Ripley must use these mechanical limbs in battle with the alien Queen, eventually grabbing her and throwing her out to die in empty space.



► **Two screens monitor each space marine while aliens move through the atmosphere processor**

► **The US *Aliens*: overhyped, overdifficult and over here**



CRITICISM

● " After the almost impossible first level, there's little to hold the attention here. The instructions between sections (particularly those preceding the first level) are interesting, especially if you haven't seen the film. But I don't recommend the US *Aliens*; the graphics are simple and poorly-coloured, and the pulsating screen in the first level is irritating. "
MIKE **69%**

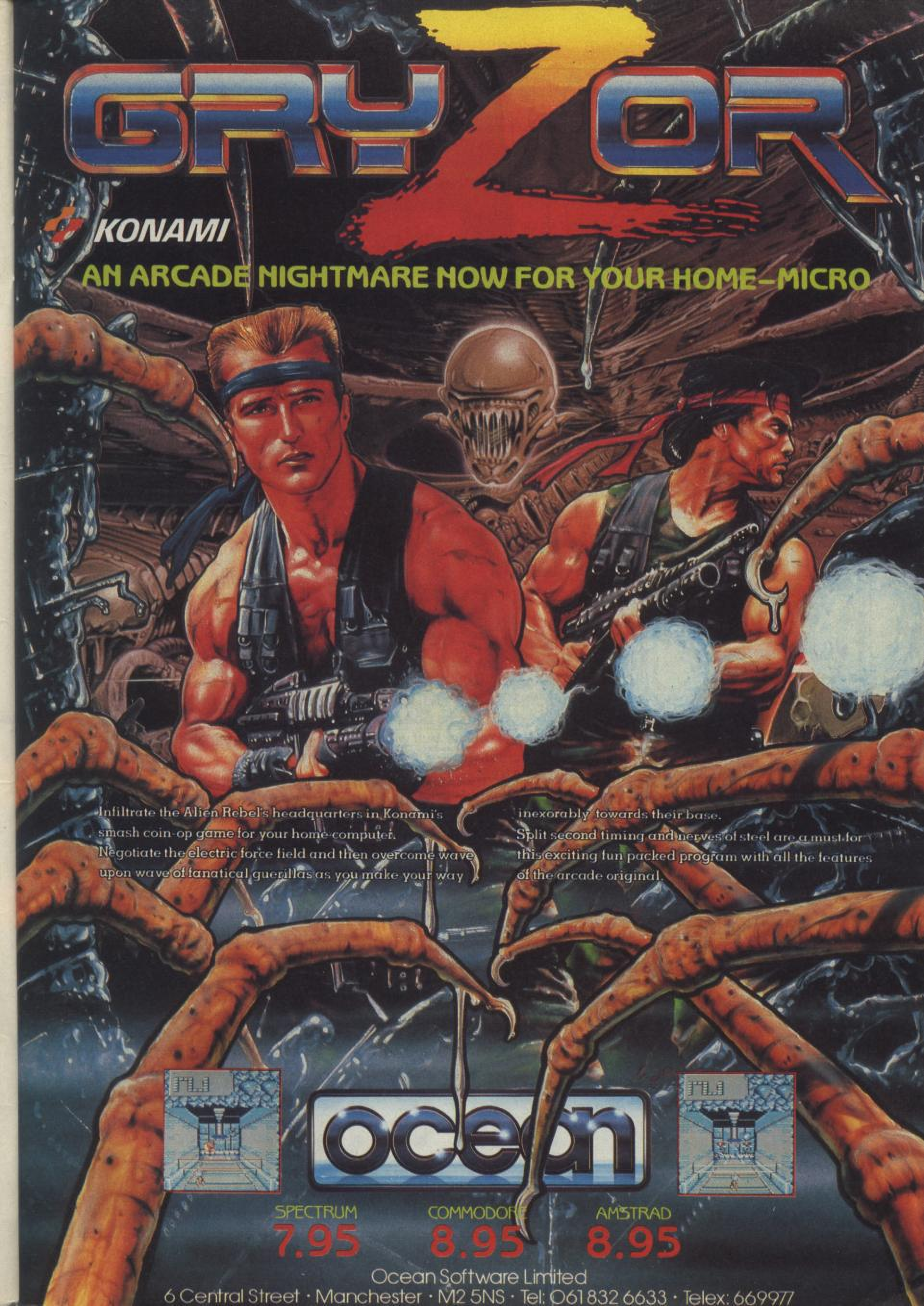
● **" The opening sequences of the US** Aliens **are atmospheric, but the rest of the game doesn't have the same quality. The first level is a bit like the hyperspace-tunnel sequence in Design Design's** Dark Star, **and it's quite playable but (big but!) the screen flashes horrendously, adding eyestrain and headaches to your problems. I couldn't get through the rest of the game without cheating. "**
BEN **10%**

● *" The US* Aliens *takes a wider view of the movie than the UK version. The graphics are less good (ranging from badly-drawn and simply-animated characters to a very detailed final screen) and less scary, but there's a much stronger relationship with the characters. No normal person could get through the US* Aliens *without cheating, so it's just as well you can skip a level; at least you can be sure of seeing all the stages. This is nowhere near as much fun as the UK* Aliens. *"*
PAUL **56%**

COMMENTS

Joystick: Sinclair
Graphics: crude, small characters but some impressive backgrounds
Sound: disjointed tune, poor effects
Options: you can go to the end of a level without playing it through, but can't complete the game this way
General rating: the lesser of two *Aliens* tie-ins; this US version is closer to the film, but the graphics are poor and gameplay very difficult

Presentation	80%
Graphics	62%
Playability	44%
Addictive qualities	43%
OVERALL	**45%**


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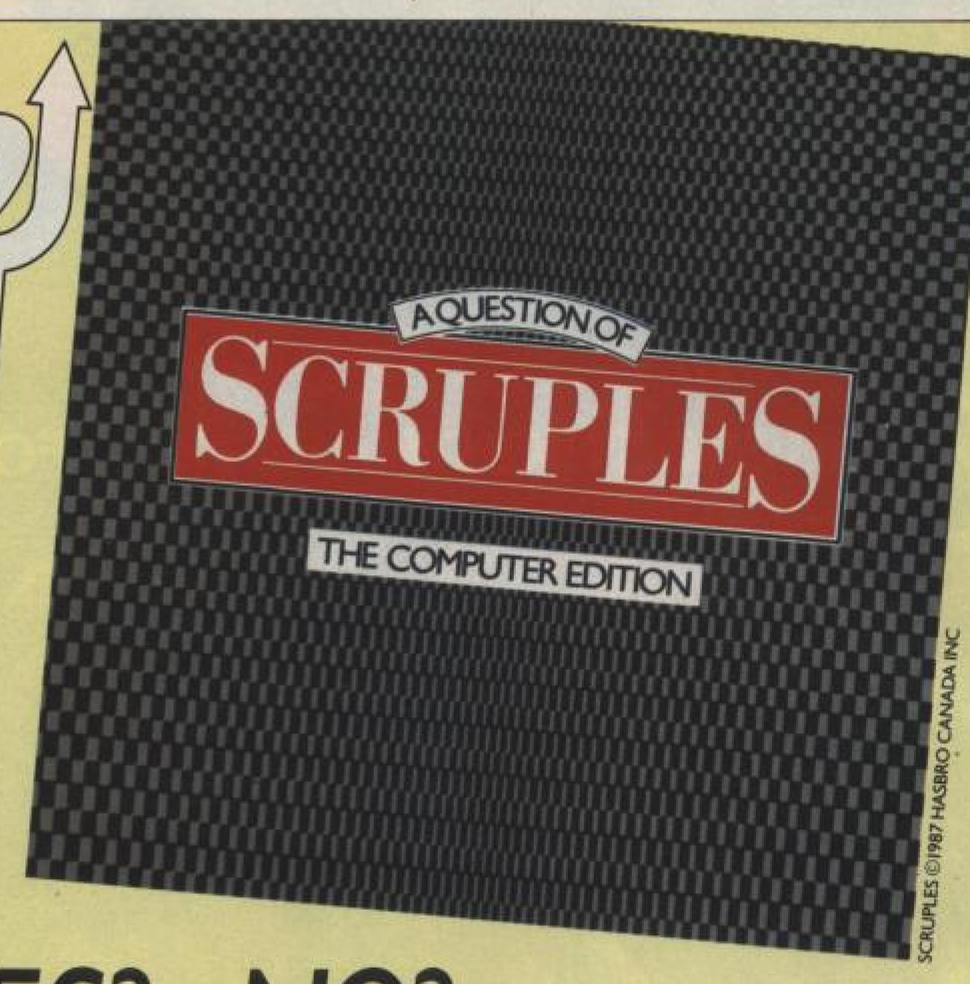
Scruples, an inventive and original computer game, is in the shops today. Do you rush out and sell a personal possession so you can buy it before pay-day?

Scruples computer game is available on Spectrum 48/128, +2, +3, Commodore 64/128, Amstrad CPC 464, 6128 and Atari ST. The computer you own is not one of these. Do you replace it immediately with one that runs Scruples?

Scruples makes such an excellent Christmas present, you buy one for your computer-mad niece. After one play you are completely hooked – do you keep it?

You are due to keep an important appointment that may affect your future career. Your spouse loads up Scruples and you get involved in a game. Do you keep the appointment?

An attractive colleague at work is becoming very attentive and asks you to dinner. You find out that not only do they dislike Scruples but they hate computers too. Do you accept their invitation?



YES? NO? ...DEPENDS.

Milton Bradley's compelling game is now available for computer. Anticipate your friend's responses to the provocative questions, in Scruples. Think carefully before answering the moral dilemma you are posed, or turn the tables and give an opposite reply to the one expected! Bluff and counter bluff will be needed, and beware, the other players (the Jury) can challenge your honesty at any time.

The computer interpretation is ingenious and funny. Up to ten people can play: all human, all computer, or any combination. There is a minimum of 64 characters to choose from, each with simulated 'intelligence'. Real players must 'adjust' their personalities and select their appearance from a gallery of faces provided. A minimum of 230 leading questions are built-in and no game will ever be the same.

Scruples, The Computer Edition, is available from all good software retailers or directly from Leisure Genius.

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Commodore 64/128	*cass* **£12.95**	*disc* **£14.95**
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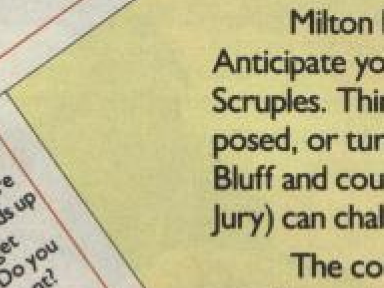
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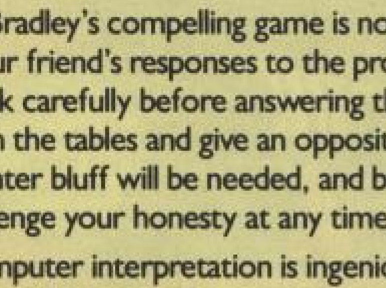
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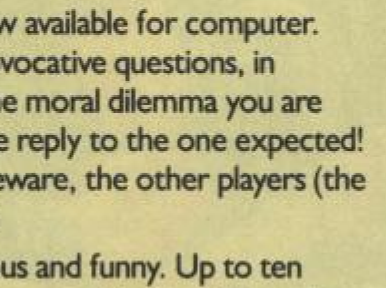
COMMODORE SCREEN



SPECTRUM SCREEN



AMSTRAD SCREEN


ATARI SCREEN

BOBSLEIGH

Producer: **Digital Integration**
Retail price: **£9.95**
Authors: **David Marshall and Rod Swift**

Tearing down an ice tunnel at speeds approaching 80mph, where the slightest mistake can write you off, is not a game for those of a nervous disposition.

But that's what Digital Integration's bobsleighing simulation is all about – and perhaps that's bobsleighing for real, too. Digital Integration is a simulations specialist ('advancing the art of simulation') and consulted British bobsleighing champion Nick Phipps for this game.

Phipps is competing for the gold medal in the Winter Olympics in February – and so can you on the Spectrum's Calgary track!

You have a choice of bobs, from amateur to Olympic, and each can be a two-man or four-man vehicle. The better the bob, the faster it goes – but it's also more expensive, and your sponsors have set limits on how much you can spend. The only way to get more cash is to compete and do well.

Before each run, you make decisions about the fitness of your crew and weather conditions. The weather affects a bob run: cold icy conditions require one type of metal runner, warm wet conditions another. Again, however, a new set of runners eats up your funds . . .

You and your crew have just 50 metres to get the heavy bob started. And humping a huge piece of metal isn't the lightest of tasks, so you need to develop stamina and strength through gruelling fitness training.

At the start line you all get on board, and the timed run begins.

A good push start will help, but after that the player must exercise great skill in driving smoothly. Contact with the ice walls as you bullet down the straights is bound to slow a bob, and travelling too high on a snow bank can make you crash.

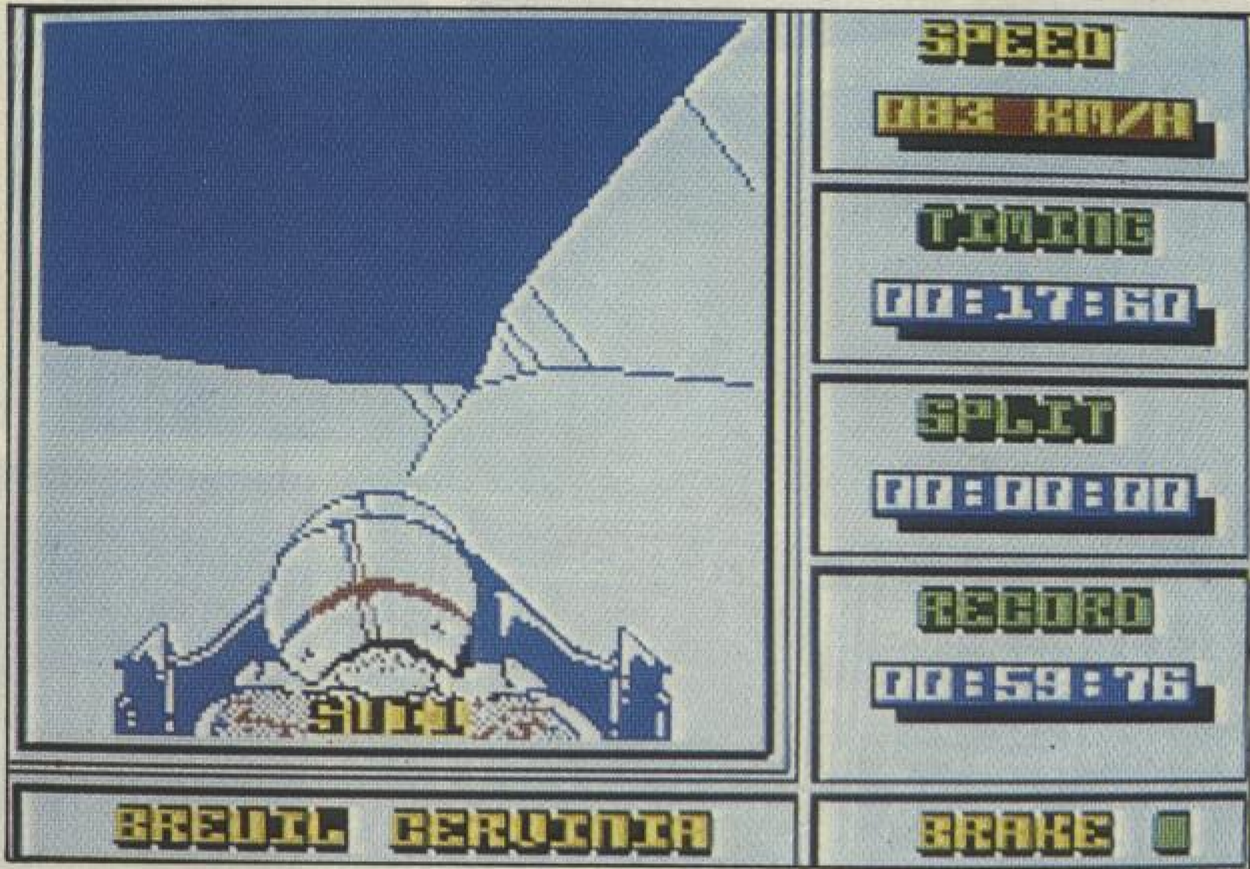
Once the finish line has been crossed the bob's brakes can be used to slow the vehicle to a standstill. But if brakes are used on the track proper, you'll be disqualified (and probably damage your bob).

Times are shown every quarter distance and a final time is posted as the finish flag is reached, with a record-time display putting your own achievement into perspective.

There are six real-life venues in each bob class (apart from Olympic) – maps and record times are shown for each venue – and if you choose to compete in a racing season the order of venues can't be changed.

Still, if you find one course impossible, you can play all the others by choosing a single track at a time – you won't be world champion that way, though.

In each venue you have a practice run and then two competitive runs; win with the lowest accumulated time, and Bob's your uncle. But if you crash on the first run you're not allowed a second – so don't let your attention wander for a moment.



► *Bobsleigh*: **hot and cold all over**

PAUL

" Yet again Digital Integration is after 'the real thing'. Motorbikes are one thing, aeroplanes another – but I bet the producer has got us on this one. There aren't many people who've been bobsleigh-racing and lived to tell the tale, so who knows if Bobsleigh**'s accurate? But it does give the player a realistic 3-D effect as he zooms (well, it's not really frighteningly fast) down the run. This interesting simulation didn't really move me in my seat, but it did make me realise how hard it is to run a bobsleigh team without going bankrupt! "**

81%

BYM

" In televised bobsleigh runs there's never a steady view of the track, which makes the shaky graphics of Bobsleigh **even more realistic. And though line graphics may seem a bit primitive they work well in a 3-D bobsleigh run! It may take some time to complete your first run, but stick with it, because once you're involved in the moneymaking aspects of winning and the fight for an Olympic gold medal the game really hots up.** Bobsleigh **mixes skills and strategies well in a realistic situation. "**

94%

► **There's no business like snow business**

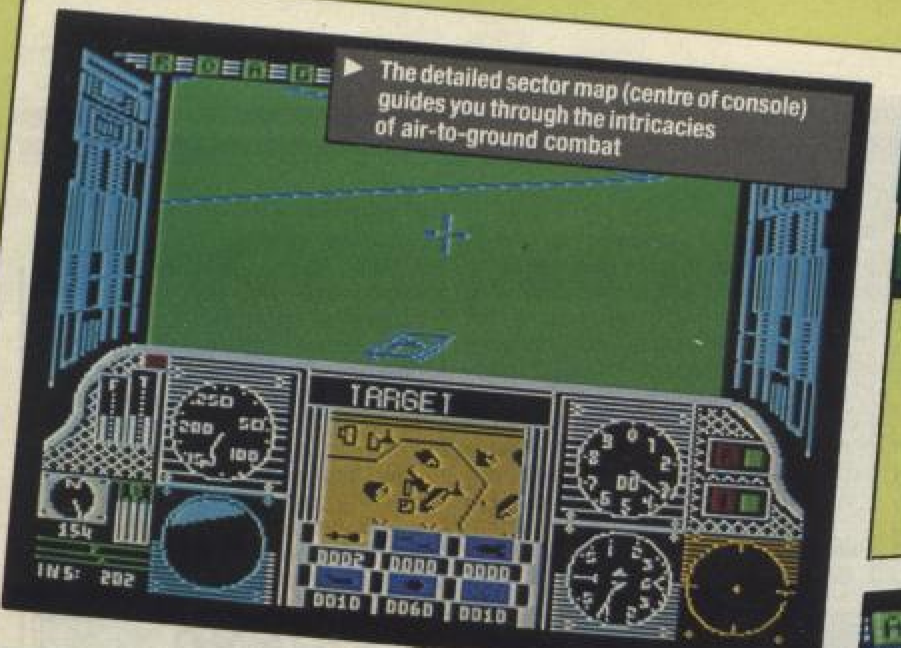


COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: simple line drawings create a realistic tunnel effect
Sound: basic beeps (and some machine-code ones too!)
Options: choice of six world-championship tracks; one or two players; two-man or four-man bobs; sleigh, runners, even tracksuit colour . . . you name it, it's a menu
General rating: an addictive simulation with plenty to do

Presentation	88%
Graphics	78%
Playability	90%
Addictive qualities	91%
OVERALL	**88%**

G·U·N·S·H·I·P



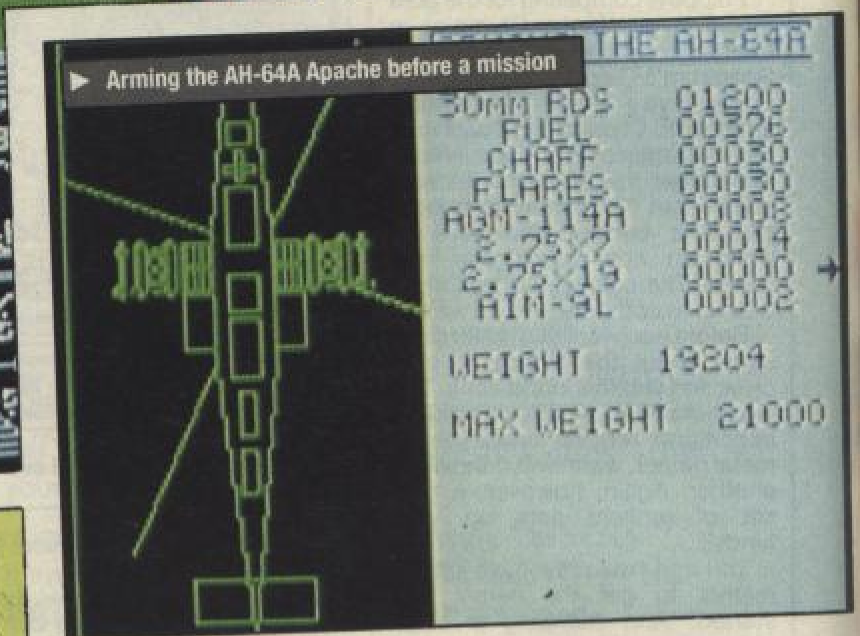
The detailed sector map (centre of console) guides you through the intricacies of air-to-ground combat



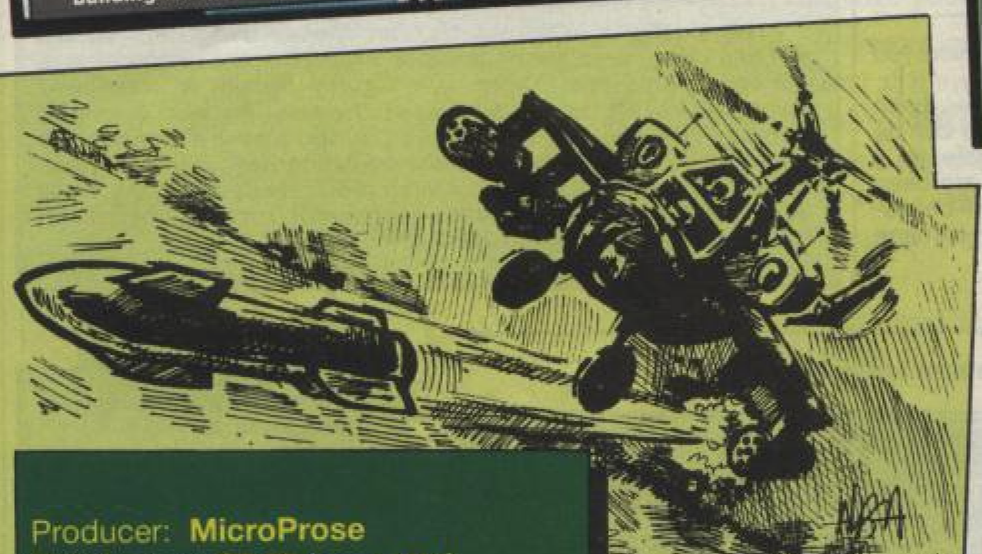
The scanner (centre of console) shows the building visible through the windscreen

Flying a military helicopter is a tough job at the best of times – and when you're in the thick of combat and they're using you for target practice, quick thinking and perfect control are your best weapons. MicroProse's *Gunship*, one of those complex simulations so popular in America, is an attempt to recreate the reality of flying a US Army armoured helicopter, the state-of-the-art AH-64A Apache introduced in 1982.

To add to the effect, *Gunship*'s two cassettes and hard cardboard case (the American-style packaging which supported its great suc-



Arming the AH-64A Apache before a mission



Producer: **MicroProse**
Retail price: **£9.95 (cassette), £12.95 (disk)**
Authors: **Arnold Hendrick and Andy Hollis**



The real thing: this $8.4 millon AH-64A Apache weighs 10,268 pounds empty, and is 58 feet 2 inches long, 48 feet wide and 15 feet 3 inches high. The engines are two T700-GE-701 turboshaft jets with a maximum engine static horsepower of 1,896.4 running on one engine. The maximum horizontal airspeed is 184 miles per hour, the maximum climb is 2,880 feet per minute and the service ceiling (ie the highest point at which it can operate) is 20,500 feet. At least, that's what the operations manual tells us.

cess on the Commodore 64 there) come complete with an 88-page 'operations manual' giving every detail of the game – and technical specifications of the real helicopter, its armament and its enemies.

Once in the chopper, you look through an armoured glass windscreen complete with cross hairs and gunsight. System-damage lights are situated above this, and below it is the main instrument console. This contains such navigational instruments as heading, course, and airspeed indicators;

" Gunship **is the most realistic flight simulation around. The copter's response to controls is remarkably convincing, and the graphics are a good deal better than** Tomahawk's **– did I detect my helicopter flying through hills, though?** Gunship **has loads of playability; the manual makes good reading for a couple of hours, and the in-game presentation is excellent. It's the best in the ever more competitive world of flying on the Spectrum . . . "**

MIKE 90%

fuel gauges; weapon update systems; a radar jammer; and an enemy threat display. There's also information on the helicopter's ammunition, a sector map, a damage monitor and a radio which brings vital messages.

The helicopter is flown using two basic controls: the 'cyclic joystick', which controls the pitch and roll (direction of the copter), and the 'collective', which alters the angle of the rotor blades (and therefore the altitude).

Flying can be simplified by choosing the 'easy' rather than the 'realistic' flight option. This limits the pitch and roll elements of flight. (Other flight difficulties include air turbulence at low altitudes.) Landing, weather conditions and the enemy's fighting skills can also be independently selected as easy or realistic.

The handbook recommends you use the realistic flying option

" Tomahawk **was good, but MicroProse's** Gunship **is out of this world. It's one of only a few games that simulate flying accurately and give you a 'real' feeling of being in the cockpit, at the helm of millions of pounds worth of machinery. And handling a helicopter is even more of a challenge than flying a fighter plane! Helicopters aren't as responsive as planes and** Gunship**'s controls reflect this important aspect. The graphics aren't as fast and smooth as those of, say,** Mercenary, **but when you finish a flight you really feel drained.** Gunship **is probably the most realistic simulation you'll ever play. "**

PAUL 94%

as soon as possible, perhaps leaving the tricky landing and weather problems for later – and once the basics of the craft and combat have been mastered in practice attacks on the US training camp, actual combat missions abroad can begin.

One of four duty assignments can be chosen: Southeast Asia, Central America, the Middle East and Western Europe. Each assignment includes some missions which are more dangerous than others, and volunteer missions are exceptionally hazardous.

Briefings before each operation give the essential information. A password and countersign are particularly important; when you're approaching a friendly base, ground control radios the password. And you'd better respond with the right countersign, or risk being blasted from the skies.

Briefings also include other information on such matters as the weather, enemy equipment and tactics.

But if you decide to be a chicken-livered cur you can go on sick call and get out of a mission.

On a mission, you're flying into the unknown. The sector map gives a localised view of the ground, and a full-screen map can be activated to give the entire layout of the combat zone. This larger map isn't entirely accurate, but does show all the major geographical features, friendly troops, installations and targets.

The AH-64A Apache is armed with standard weaponry, but before some missions it can be rearmed to your specifications. Cannon ammunition, flares and fuel can all be added (within a weight limit), or left behind if unnecessary.

The enemy strikes with ground fire from antiaircraft guns and surface-to-air missiles, and with its own airborne fighters.

But the enemy's ground radar can be disrupted and your movements disguised by releasing metal strips of chaff, or by activating missile jamming circuits.

And combative Soviet-made HIND helicopters, sent up to attack, can be outmanoeuvred and blasted from the sky in a perilous battle of wits. (Note those HINDS; the enemies in *Gunship* are recognisably America's enemies, and there's even a warning that 'the Warsaw pact is the most formidable enemy on this planet'!)

Fighting in *Gunship* is very high-tech. The TADS (Target Acquisition & Designation System) tracks a target once you're close to it, so it's always in your sights.

But some weapons are only effective against particular targets: your 30mm cannon can destroy everything but bunkers, while Hellfire air-to-ground missiles (directed by laser to a TADS target) can take out bunkers as well as all vehicles. On firing cannons and missiles the helicopter recoils and must be quickly brought back under control.

Once a mission has ended and you've brought the copter to rest, the debriefing begins. You could be promoted; you could end up working for the US Army Sanitary Maintenance Corps; more usually, you'll have to make a decision on whether to refuel, rearm or repair the helicopter.

Remember, however, that if you land in the wrong place you might spend the duration in a prisoner-of-war camp. Spectrum gaming, let alone war, is hell.

But is it fantasy or fact? Perhaps the playability is all that matters, though MicroProse may have a special insight. The American company's President and well-known eccentric, 'Wild' Bill Stealey, is an enthusiastic military man who even put a *real* helicopter simulator, used for training pilots, on MicroProse's stand at The *PCW* Show!

And the company's releases next year will include *Project: Stealth Fighter*, supposedly simulating an American fighter plane so secret that nobody but MicroProse has heard of it.

In the meantime, CRASH's reviewers have greeted *Gunship* as the best of the few helicopter simulations around. Others include Digital Integration's 1985 *Tomahawk* (93% Overall in Issue 23) and Durell's 1984 *Combat Lynx* (88% Overall in Issue 10).

" **Anyone out there considering jumping into the cockpit of an AH-64A Apache without an induction course, forget it! Even if you're not into reading pages of instructions, take time out to attack** Gunship**'s operations manual. It's well worth it – and this is the best helicopter simulation yet.** Gunship **brings together the realistic aspects – helicopter controls, reactions from those controls, and travelling above ground – and the excitement of a thrilling, involved mission with deadly enemies. "**

BYM 91%



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: vector graphics updated superquick
Sound: the occasional beep – but you can't hear much in the din of battle anyway
Options: retry a mission; easy/realistic modes of flight, landing, weather and enemy; a training camp and four combat assignments; sick call option for pilots who get cold feet
General rating: a challenging and complex simulation, the strongest contender for King Of The Clouds yet!

Presentation	94%
Graphics	88%
Playability	87%
Addictive qualities	92%
OVERALL	**92%**

DEATH OR GLORY

Producer: **CRL**
Retail price: **£8.95**
Authors: **Wise Owl Software**

Yet again space is taken over by an invading enemy fleet. As usual, you are the only one who can take them on and save your civilisation from a fate worse than a wet Wednesday in Worthing. In a rare touch of realism, you have a limited fuel supply.

First encountered are the small fighter ships that buzz like an angry swarm about their mother ship. Your craft can rotate around its axis and move forward, sometimes colliding with enemy ships – and as long as your shield survives, this quickly crushes them, though it can knock you off course.

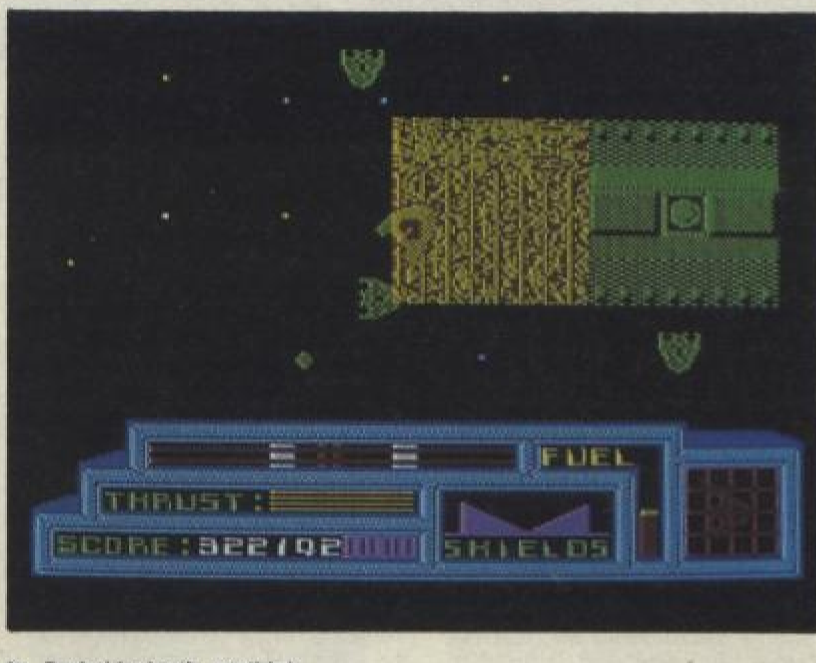
After you've carved a pathway through the enemy fleet, the awesome mother ship glides into view and can be destroyed with bombs from your limitless supply.

CRITICISM

● " *Death Or Glory* is an average shoot-'em-up. The graphics are pleasant (excellent shaded background, twinkling stars), the limited sound is enough and there's some fun to be had, despite difficult controls. "
NICK **58%**

● **" This could be rewritten as** Death Or Boredom. **The graphics are OK, the nasties aren't too nasty, the scrolling is alright, but talk about aimless missions . . . this isn't so much a shoot-'em-up as an actionless bomb-'em-down. "**
BYM **20%**

● " Death Or Glory *has brilliant graphics, with some nice bas-relief, strangely jerkless scrolling and the odd cute alien. But there's virtually no gameplay. Dispersing pretty bits of metal around space is fun, but the enemy force is pathetic; you're more likely to fall asleep than get killed.* "
BEN **29%**



▶ **Probably death, we think**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: attractive and imaginative
Sound: occasional booms

General rating: all that glitters has not gameplay

Presentation	40%
Graphics	63%
Playability	34%
Addictive qualities	30%
OVERALL	**36%**

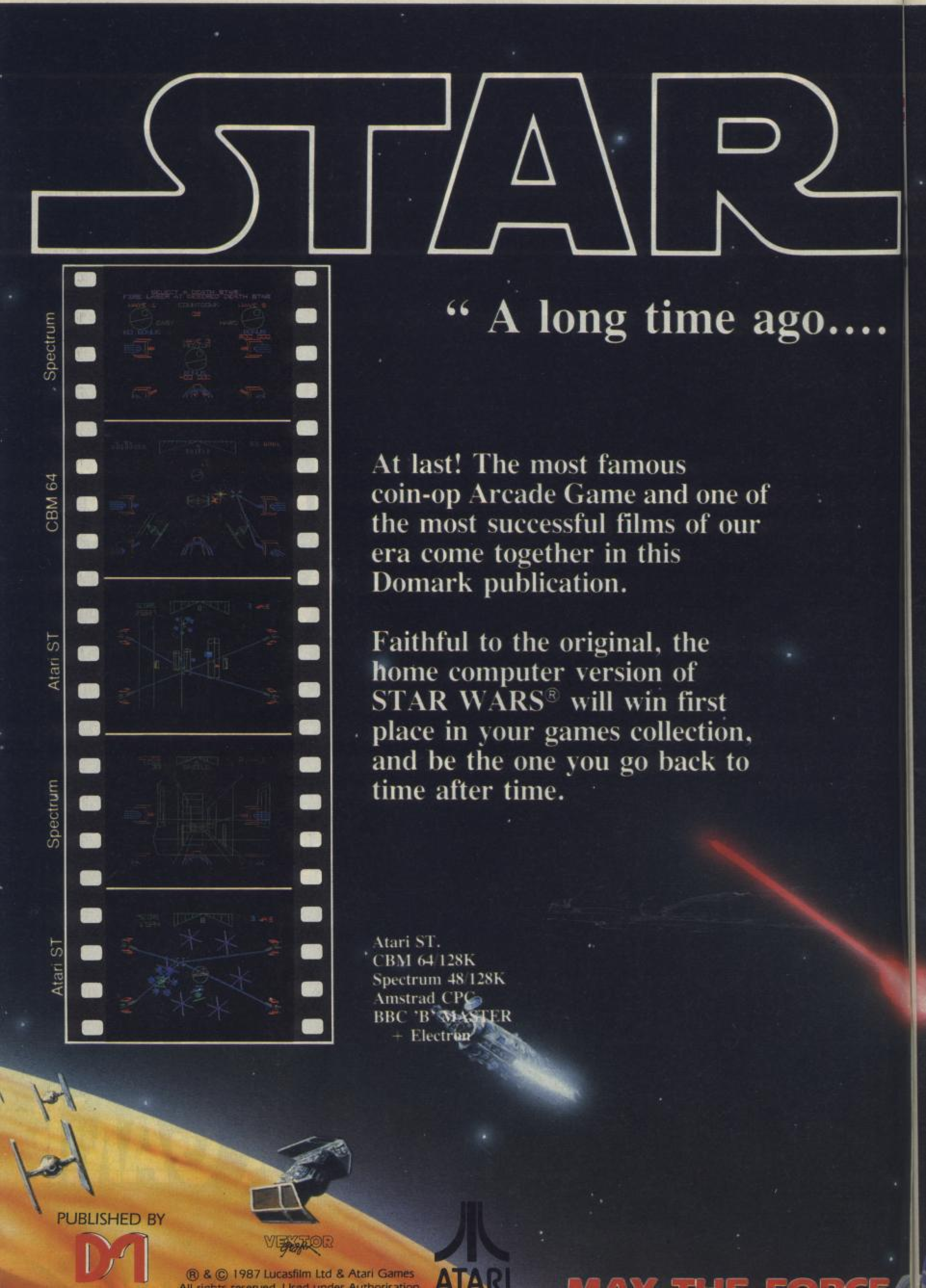
LUCASFILM MADE IT THE BIGGEST MOVIE

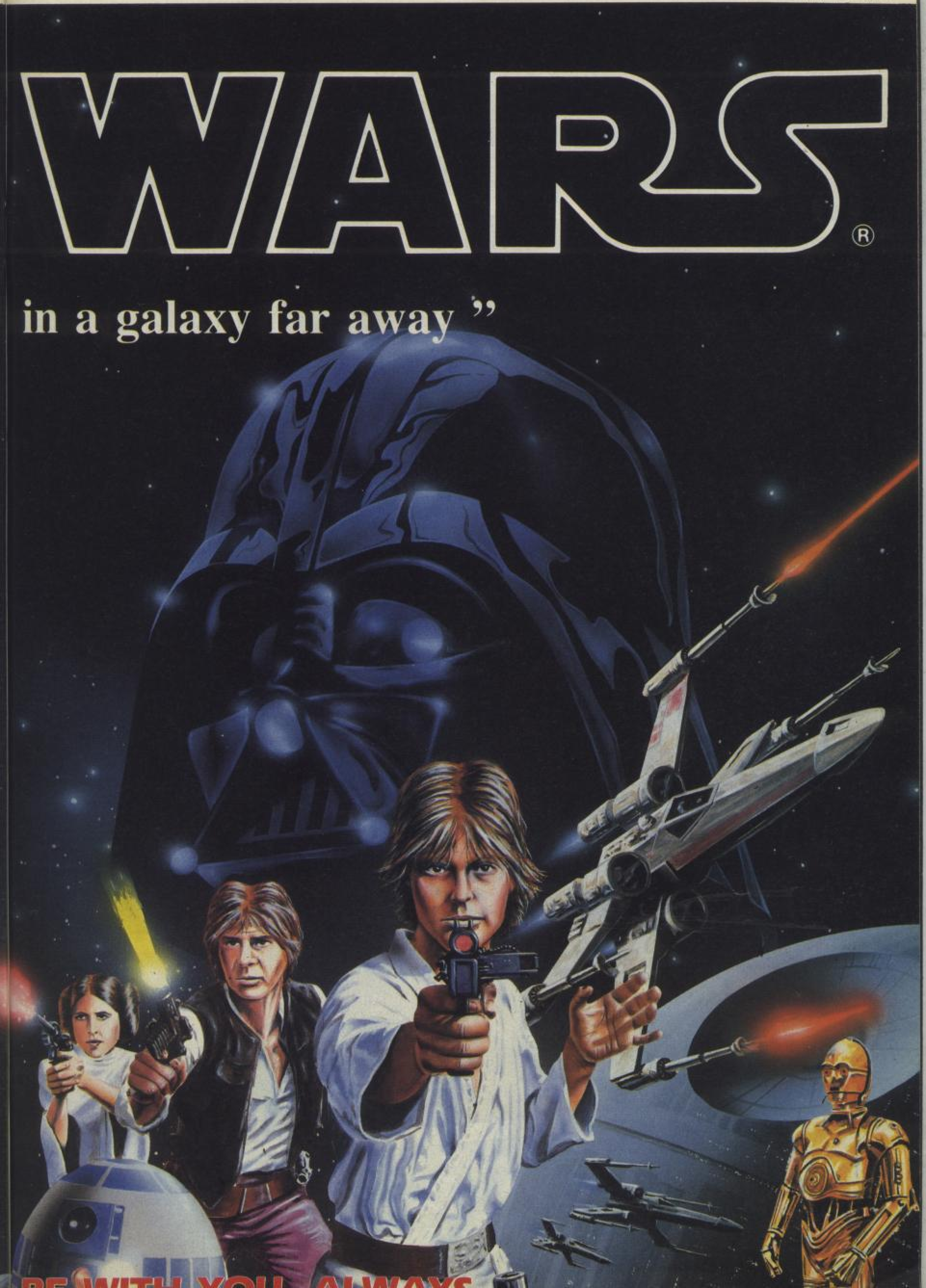
ATARI MADE IT THE BIGGEST ARCADE COIN-OP

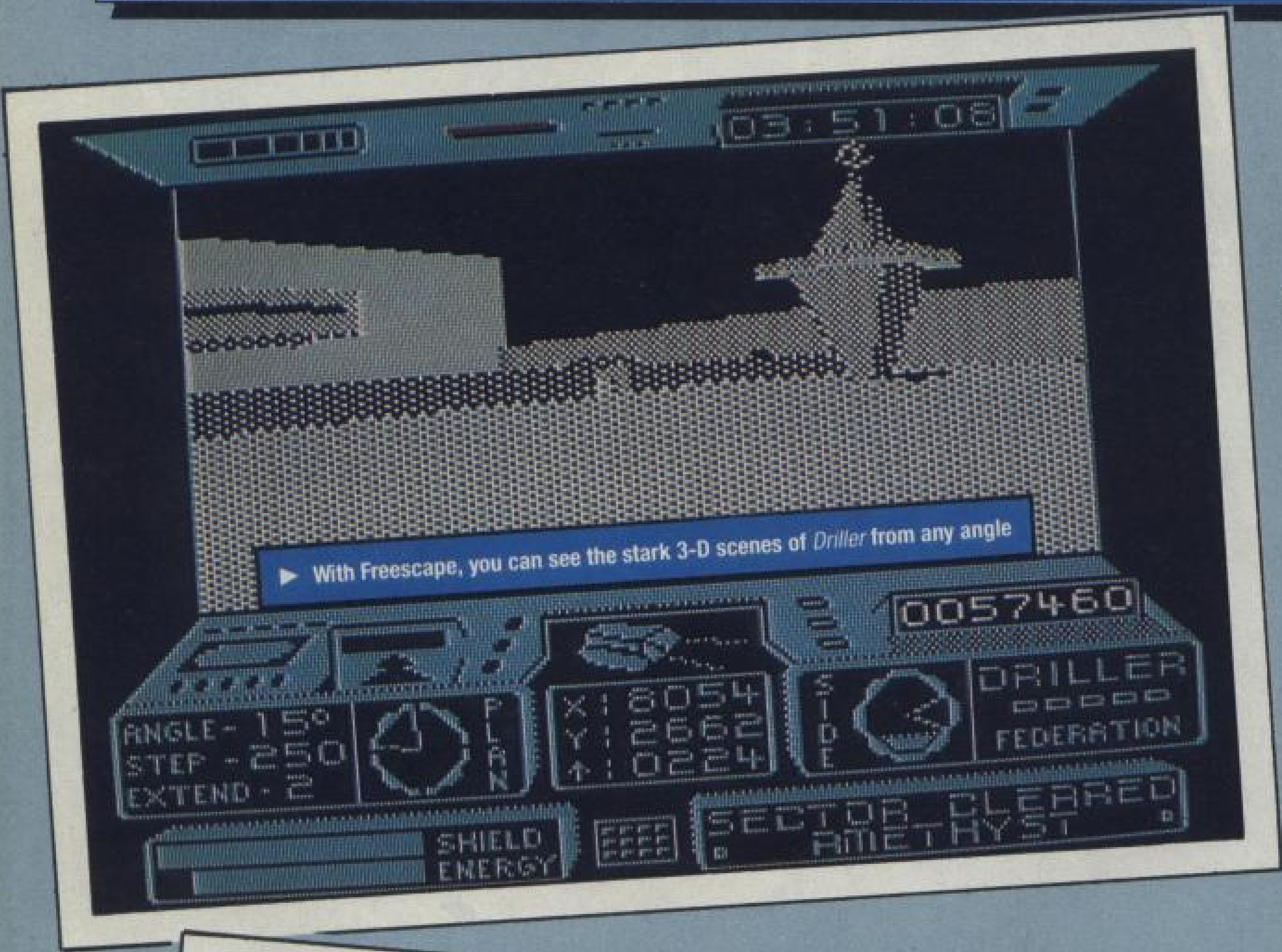
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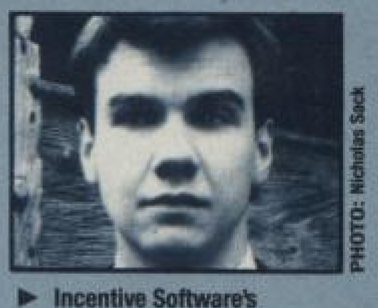

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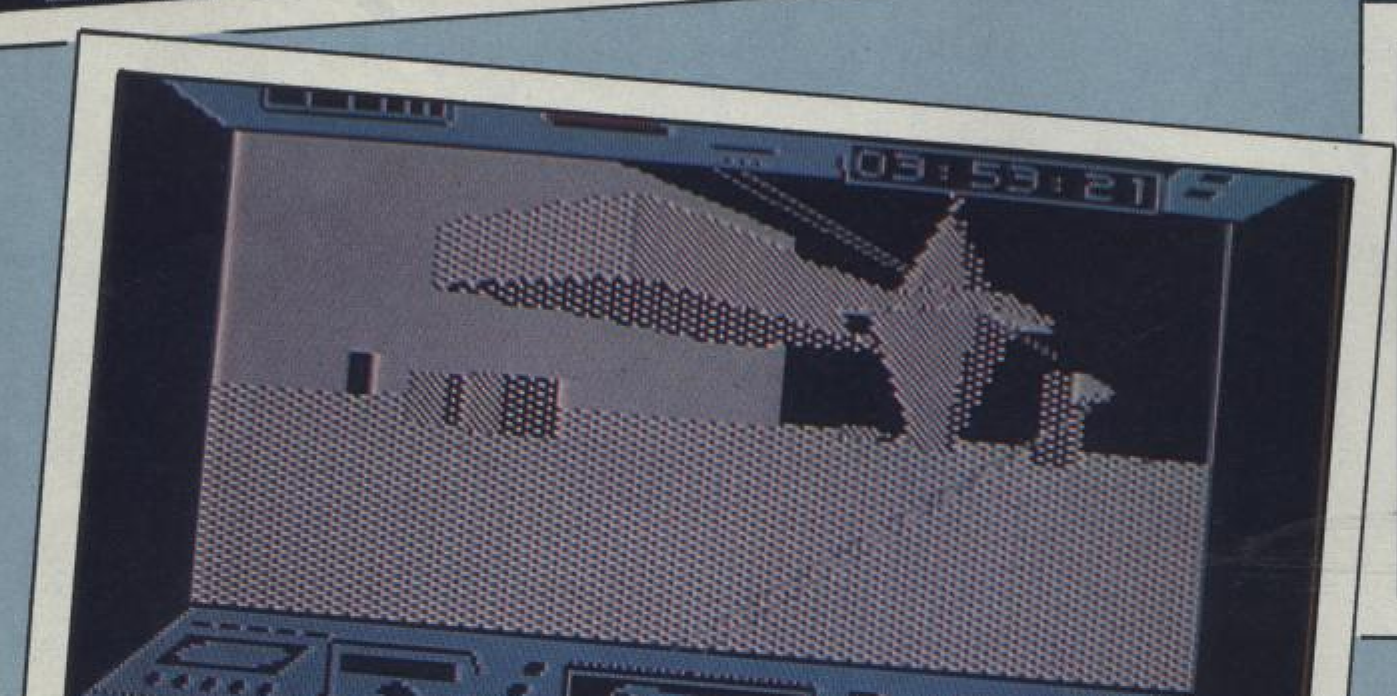


► With Freescape, you can see the stark 3-D scenes of *Driller* from any angle

Mitral is a distant moon, once mined by exiled criminals. The mining has caused a build-up of gas beneath the moon's surface, and the gas must be drawn off to prevent Mitral exploding with disastrous consequences for its mother planet. In *Driller* you explore the deserted moon, finding gas

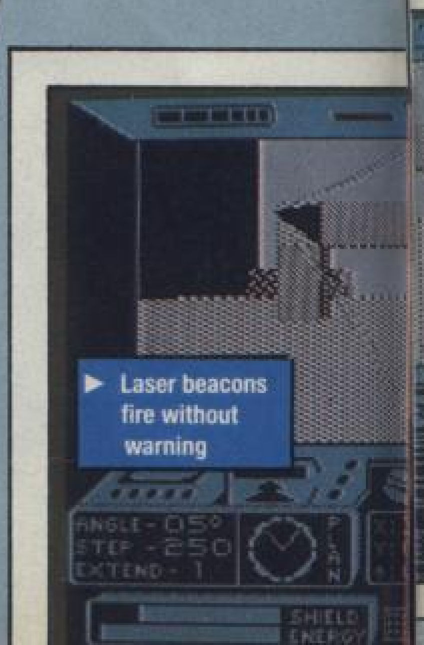

PHOTO: Nicholas Sack

► Incentive Software's Ian Andrew: 14 months on 'one of the best Spectrum games ever'





► Shooting rubicon crystals builds up power for the hazardous exploration of Mitral



► Laser beacons fire without warning

Producer: **Incentive Software**
Retail price: **£14.95 (cassette), £17.95 (disk)**
Authors: **Major Developments**

D·R·I·L·L·E·R

A CRASH Smash

pockets and placing drilling rigs in each of 18 sectors – using the solid-3-D, all-round-view system Freescape, which is used for the first time in *Driller* and is being promoted as 'the new dimension'.

The topography of Mitral is seen through a large window with controls beneath it. The Freescape system can be likened to a large transparent bubble with the player pinned at the centre. This 'bubble' can rotate in all directions, allowing you to look out and examine objects at any angle, even from behind and below. In *Driller*, think of the excavation probe you drive as the bubble.

14 months' work by Incentive's in-house design team has produced an environment of over 20,000 billion possible window views (though many of these are virtually identical, the result of only a small shift in the angle of view). Information is priority-sorted, so one object can obscure another in true 3-D perspective.

Your excavation probe has controllable speed and turn angle (that means you can set how far each move will take you, whether it's a backward/forward step or a left or right turn). The main body of the probe can be tilted left or right, elevated or lowered to gain more visual information.

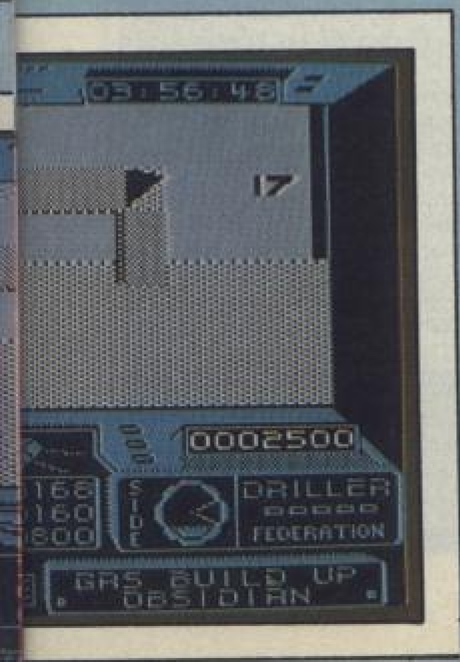
Mitral is made up of large open squares surrounded by walls, block buildings, steps, trenches and acid rivers. It is deserted. Laser beacons fire on you when they detect you; your probe's defensive shield gives some protection, but it's diminished by repeated hits.

To survive the probe can retreat out of range, get behind the beacon, or fire upon it with your own targetable lasers. Some beacons can be neutralised by severing their power supplies.

Orbital scanners also fire at you, appearing with an audible warning – but there's little that can be done other than evade their attack.

For more mobile exploration the probe can dock with a reconnaissance jet, if it can be found. To be allowed into the hanger which houses this vehicle, you have to enter a building and there solve a puzzle (other puzzles in *Driller* when solved allow the use of a teleporter or provide other options). The jet is activated by docking the probe into its underside.





" It's probably getting a bit boring, all this praise, but here goes: Driller is one of the best Spectrum games ever. The graphics are amazing; for once the claims made by the publisher are surpassed, and Freescape really IS the new dimension! After a couple of hours you don't notice the jerkiness of the graphics, either. And Incentive's Major Developments team hasn't relied on the graphics – Driller is a compulsive game. Once you've learned the basics, read the (extensive!) literature, and sorted out the first few drilling rigs, Driller opens up and you really can't put it down. Just trying to position rigs accurately is a game in itself, and Driller offers so much it's a must for any Spectrum-owner. "
MIKE 97%

In the jet, as in the probe, you can look all round, and have even more versatile movement: the jet can go up and down and fly above all but the tallest of Mitral's constructions. The craft can also land at will, and hover. But though its onboard lasers afford it some protection, the jet's limited shield strength makes it vulnerable to attack.

Throughout *Driller*, the controls beneath the main view screen give your probe's present position in x- and y-coordinates, as well as altitude if you're in the jet. Using these coordinates you can pinpoint a drilling position and go back to it game after game; they also help in mapping the huge area of Mitral, and a 3-D blank cardboard model comes with the game to help mappers.

Plan and side-view screens give further navigational support.

Laser firing, craft movement and shield strength all depend on an energy supply, which can be restored by firing on two types of rubicon crystal found all over Mitral.

But the object throughout is drilling. When a potential gas pocket is located, a drilling rig can be teleported down to Mitral's surface and positioned. (You can't drill from the jet, though.)

Once the rig has penetrated the gas pocket, a read-out indicates how much of the gas has been released; if that's more than 50%, the sector is safe. Points are awarded for successful gas extractions, and you can call up information on the total amount of gas tapped and sectors made safe.

" There's just so much manoeuvrability and playability packed into Driller you can find something different every time you play. And it's an amazing achievement, considering that whenever you move *all* the graphics have to be recalculated and filled in again. Once you're in the jet the game turns into an equally brilliant flight simulation as you zip over walls and into complexes. The elaborate control system can be a bit of a nuisance at times – once I ended upside down and the wrong way round in the middle of a shed somewhere and had to abort the game! But there's nothing to fault in Driller. It's the game of the year. "
NICK 98%

Even if a drill is placed inaccurately, it can be teleported away again, though this eats heavily into the probe's energy reserves.

Once a sector has been made safe the next can be reached by travelling through doorways in walls, blasting obstructions, or using a teleport.

And all the time, as you explore *Driller*'s universe of screens, time is running out for Mitral – an approaching meteor threatens the volatile gas-filled moon. You have just four hours and eight seconds (don't ask us why) to complete *Driller*.

A 32-page booklet explaining *Driller* and Freescape comes with the game.

" 'Freescape is the new dimension' – you'd better believe it. If you miss out on this you'll suffer. Judging from Driller, Freescape is going to have more success on the Spectrum than Ultimate's Filmation (the isometric 3-D technique first used in Knight Lore in 1984) could ever have had. And Driller is more than just a demo of a new technique (though it would be a brilliant one); it creates the strongest, most addictive atmosphere you can imagine. Driller: written now, but conceived for the future. "
PAUL 97%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: a series of simple, monochromatic, static pictures – with realistic 3-D and a 'looking around' effect that comes closer to being there than any more detailed screens
Sound: spot effects
General rating: with a stunning use of 3-D graphics, very challenging gameplay and the fascination of exploring a Freescape world, *Driller* is one of the best games CRASH has seen

Presentation	93%
Graphics	98%
Playability	96%
Addictive qualities	97%
OVERALL	**97%**

720°

Producer: **US Gold**
Retail price: **£8.99**
Authors: **Tiertex**

Just when everyone thought a pedestrian's limbs were safe . . . back come the skateboarders in *720°*, licensed from an Atari coin-op.

One of these potential leg-amputators has been let loose in Skate City, and you control his every leap and movement. There are four parks in which this athlete can jump, climb ramps, run downhill or slalom. Points (and medals) are earned for each trick and with these our man can add to his stock of tickets, which allow him to enter skateboard parks.

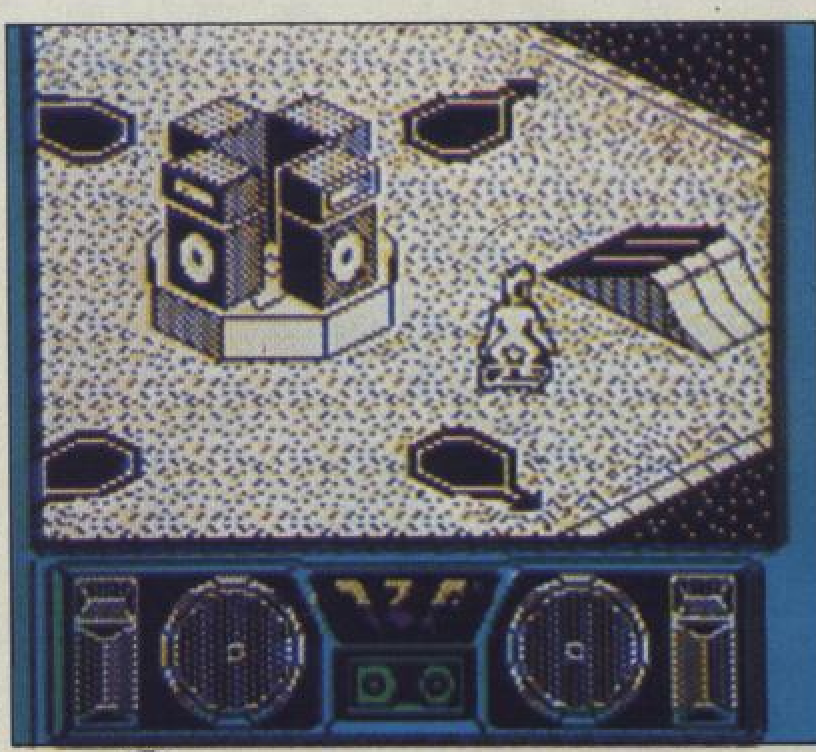
But beware: the streets aren't safe for skateboarders. Speeding bikers zip along the highways, and any injudicious contact with one of these leather-clad road hogs temporarily knocks our hero onto his butt and precious time is lost. There are also some ponds for him to fall into.

To compensate for these hazards, he can pick up dollar bills and earn bonus points by running over hidden locations.

There are shops where better equipment, pads, boards, shoes and helmets can be bought to improve performance and earn extra points. To buy them, use the cash prizes you can accumulate for special stunts.

The position of all shops and parks can be revealed by activating one of the street-map pads, or by following the direction-indicators.

If the skateboarder wastes too much time shopping, or sitting immobilised on the floor, killer bees swarm after him on skateboards. Sanctuary can be sought in a park, but only if a valid ticket is held. Still, if he survives these beasts with a sting in their rear ends, your wheeled hero can live to skate another day.





MIKE

" 720° is amusing and good to play the first few times, and it looks very Paper Boy**esque. But it soon loses its appeal. "**

69%

PAUL

" Yeah! Now this is my kind of game. The inhabitants of Ludlow don't take too kindly to 'youngsters' rolling the streets at night, but now all my worries are over – I can have all the enjoyment of big-city skateboarding in the comfort of my own home. The play area of 720° scrolls superbly, and it's filled with some great animated characters. It's very easy to get into, but as the game progresses the difficulty doesn't increase significantly – and addictiveness suffers. Still, there's nothing else anything like this, and US Gold has set a superb standard. "

86%

ROBIN

" I can't recall ever playing anything like 720°. The graphics are amazing, with effects such as break dancers and people having fights. It takes some time to get used to the control method, but once that's mastered it's plain skating all the way. My only complaint is that 720° could have been made harder: for instance, the ice parks could have become progressively more difficult. Fans of the arcade original will love this game, it's so playable and addictive – and it's one of the most imaginative games to emerge this year. "

88%

► *720°*: **'amazing graphics' in a coin-op conversion**



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: realistic, with detailed and smoothly-animated characters
Sound: poor spot effects
Options: trainer/advanced levels
General rating: a playable simulation without much depth

Presentation	82%
Graphics	84%
Playability	86%
Addictive qualities	75%
OVERALL	**81%**

FREDDY HARDEST

Producer: **Imagine**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Dinamic**

First there was Biggles, then there was 007, now there is Hardest . . . Freddy Hardest. Skilfully posing as an astral playboy, our hero is in fact a counterespionage agent in this humorous arcade game written by Spanish software house Dinamic.

On leaving a party, Hardest crashes his spaceship on an enemy planet. To escape this hostile world he'll have to hijack a spacecraft, but first he must find the spacebase.

Freddy trudges across the planet's horizontally-scrolling landscape, doing his best to avoid a flock of attacking aliens and human reptile mutants. To get him through this maelstrom of malevolence, Freddy is equipped with a laser and a devastating repertoire of high kicks.

He can also leap over the frothing lava mouths which obstruct his path.

When our titanium-tough hero has reached the spacebase he can't escape to freedom straight away – first he has to decipher the Captain's code. Then comes Freddy's final task: he must fuel the ship by shifting nuclear energy cells, using the base's lift, and prepare for blastoff.

MIKE

" The graphics aren't as good as they might be and there's a little colour clash, but after the first few attempts you get the feel of Freddy Hardest **and it's very addictive. "**

83%

PAUL

" It's good to see the Dinamic programmers improving with every game they bring out. Freddy Hardest **is much more playable and enjoyable than their previous work for the Ocean/Imagine group** (Army Moves **(Issue 41),** Game Over **(Issue 44) – 54% and 55% Overall respectively).**

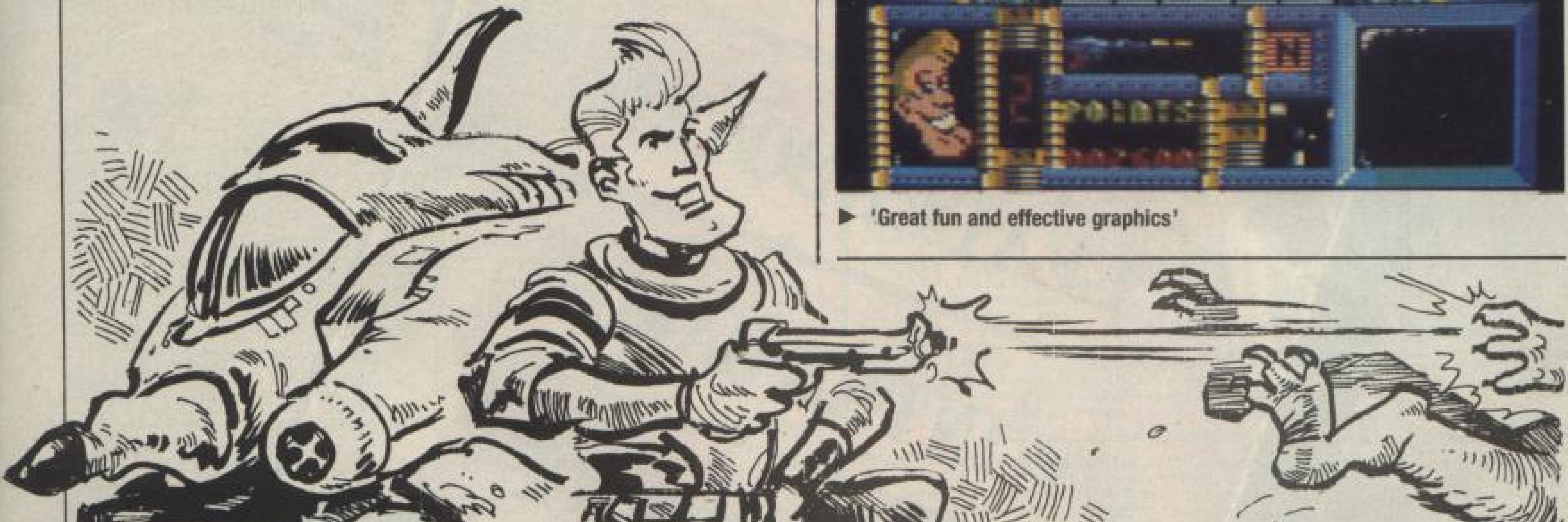
Freddy bears an unbelievable likeness to the cartoon character Desperate Dan, but he makes the game. The first two levels differ enough to add addictiveness; the second level is very similar to Ocean's V **(Issue 29), though it's more playable. It's also more attractive than the first and the action is more intense.**

It's just as well Nick Roberts is promising the access code for the second level in the Christmas Special Playing Tips . . . "

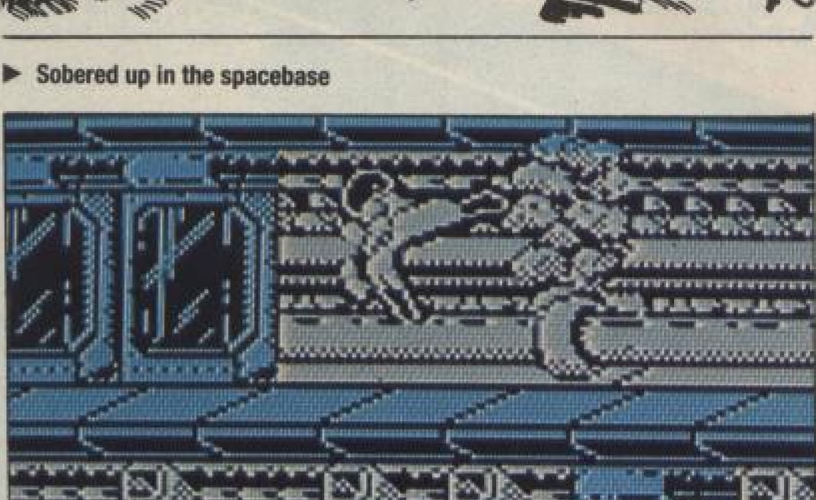
86%



► **'Great fun and effective graphics'**



► **Sobered up in the spacebase**



NICK

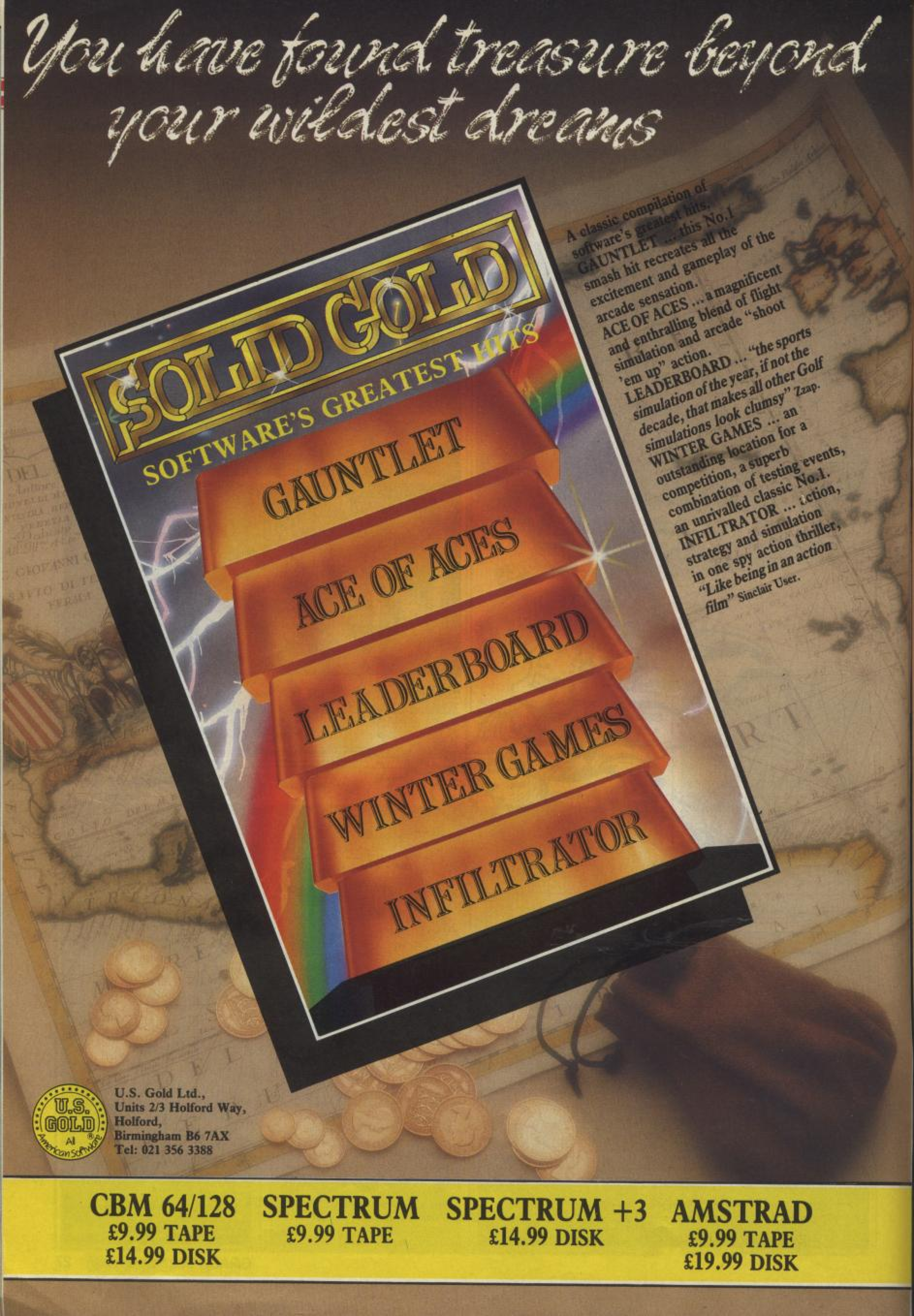
" At the start of all the best games you'll find fantastic graphics and a great tune, arranged like the beginning of a film. Freddy Hardest **is no exception, and here you get Freddy doing an impression of the roaring MGM lion! Freddy is quite well-defined and his hunky stance gives him the 007 look. The second stage, in the spacebase, is full of surprises, and though it's very like Ocean's** V **you'll get loads of fun out of this excellent game. "**

85%

COMMENTS

Joystick: Kempston
Graphics: in both sections, mostly divided into monochrome areas to avoid colour clash; detailed backgrounds
Sound: delightful title tune and spot effects
Options: definable keys
General rating: Dinamic's best game yet is great fun, with realistic animation and effective graphics

Presentation	86%
Graphics	86%
Playability	86%
Addictive qualities	85%
OVERALL	**85%**


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A slightly shorter than usual Forum this month because of all the other articles competing for my defensible space (about which I'm very possessive). Pride in the quality of what you own is always so very important, I always think, and that's largely the the thinking behind the writer of this month's winning letter (attracting, as it does, the £30 worth of personally-chosen software). But I'll let Dominique do the talking . . .

WORRIED BY BUDGET

Dear Lloyd,
I have been reading your magazine for almost a year now, and it is by far the best Spectrum magazine around.

After reading Issue 45 however, I felt I had to write to you concerning your article on the development of the software market regarding budget games, and also the letter by Anthony Daniels in your FORUM. Barnaby Page's fascinating article, provoked some disturbing thoughts in my mind.

Firstly, by pointing out that many full priced specialist software houses are branching into budget games, Barnaby began to worry me slightly.

The most notable example is Hewson's new label Rack-It. Even their budget games are not much better than you would expect for under £3. If such a successful house as Hewson (I have all their games since I bought my Spectrum in December last year) is being forced to join the ranks of budget producers, times must be getting hard. It is my belief that top software houses such as Ocean, Activision and Elite – all mentioned in the article – will soon have to follow suit leaving the Spectrum games market consisting of nothing but budget games.

I find this a disturbing prospect, as although the presence of more budget games might improve the quality, they would still not be able to match anything like the standard of today's full-price games.

Personally, I take pride in my collection of software, which does include budget games, but despite this, I would not be prepared to put up with lower class entertainment on my computer. No game can be played for ever, so I would soon get bored to tears with an out of date Spectrum and its games, which I thought would be a major part of home entertainment for several years to come.

I would be forced to change to either a 16-bit machine or to the new variety of games consoles, of which I find the Sega most impressive, which brings me to the letter from Anthony Daniels.

Anthony made a point about originality in games. Original games are not necessarily good ones. I found *The Sentinel* very tedious to play, and games like *Exolon*, *Zynaps*, *Barbarian* and *Enduro Racer* all follow well worn themes but are nevertheless excellent games. This might just be because I am one of a new generation of Spectrum owners, but I don't really think so.

What makes unoriginal games good enough to buy is the ever improving standards of programming, plus those extra special touches and slight variations from the basic idea. The games consoles provide both original (*World Runner*, *Metroid*, *Choplifter*) and unoriginal (*Out Run*, *Space Harrier*, *Gradius*) games, and they all look good to me.

If and when I convert to a Sega, I will hang on to my Spectrum anyway, as I believe that software standards will continue to rise as long as software companies takes heed of what people like myself are saying. (I know you will, won't you Lloyd?).

For the 8-bit machines to flourish, the right people must provide the right games. The right games are the games that the average games-player wants, and we do not want poor versions of full-price games. That is what budget games really are, after all.

Congratulations, Newsfield, on THE GAMES MACHINE.
Dominique Donalds, Emsworth, Hampshire

Thanks for your thoughts Dominique, they have earned you some free software – for your Spectrum . . . I would be wary of 'converting' to a console because it is a different beast. Think of it as an addition to your home computer rather than as a replacement.

I think full-price labels still perceive themselves as essential to the general well-being of 8-bit computer games. Part of this is that they spend money advertising. Budget houses like Code Masters claim that they pay as much as a full-price house for development and programming, but can sell cheaper because they don't waste money on adverts. But I think Code Masters are overlooking the fact that, apart from informing the public of a product's release, advertising is vital to raising the general level of awareness and interest in the whole games market (and leaving aside the fact that that helps fund magazines, which in turn raise the level of interest in the whole field).

But it must also be said that some of the scarifying about budget barbarian hordes may be unfounded; the quality of budget games is improving dramatically. In Issue 46, for instance, more than half the budget games scored over 50%, though they're often perceived as 20%-30%. That issue two Code Masters games, Professional Ski Simulator *and* Dizzy, *scored in the high 70s and this issue M.A.D.'s* U.C.M. *gets 87%.*

As to originality, there are only so many 'stories' to tell. The trick, and the skill, really lies in the telling. And you are right; if this market only wanted the latest, most original concept going, then Zynaps *would not have been a hit – bit it was.*
LM

HALF THE BITS MAY BE BETTER THAN ALL THE BITS

Dear Lloyd,
In the last couple of FORUMs many letters have praised 16-bit computers and new games consoles. These letters stated that Atari ST would become the 'new Spectrum'. I strongly disagree.

The other week I bought *Renegade* (128K), started playing it and thought, 'Wow, this is amazing!'. The next day, my friend came up to copy my homework. He used to have a Spectrum but he now has an Atari ST and his Dad has an Amiga. He came into the room and saw *Renegade*. Immediately he sat down by the computer, picked up the joystick and started playing. I thought that he would get up and leave the game alone, saying he had much better games on his computer. But he didn't. He stared humming the theme tune and shouting 'You die scumball!' and 'I'm going to knee you in the nuts this time'.

When I asked when he was going to copy my homework he kept saying: 'After the next game'. ▶



Two hours later I had to drag him from the computer and send him home. He left without copying my homework, and he was still humming the theme tune the next day. In school he kept saying to me that Renegade was the best game he'd ever seen, better than all his games on both his Atari and Amiga. He even mentioned something about buying a new Spectrum.

This really goes to show that the Spectrum is not dead, but very much alive and well in the competition – which some people don't seem to think. So, to all those people who are thinking of buying an Atari ST or Amiga, I would seriously reconsider your choice.
Gareth Enticott, Braunton, N Devon

There are two aspects here (if we forget that your friend sounds like a foul-mouthed cheat!): first that different computers (whether 8- or 16-bit) have their strong and weak points – many game styles work better on the Spectrum than they can even on an Amiga; and don't forget, the Spectrum still has one of the fastest processors. Second, it's worth considering what Christina Erskine said in the last issue – that the power of 16-bit may make 8-bit programmers improve their product, in playability at least. No, the Spectrum is very far from dead.
LM

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Dear Lloyd
I think that the main reason that we buy computer games is being overlooked. Computer magazines (including CRASH) have been neglecting why computer games are being bought and, like a lot of Spectrum owners, have become preoccupied with aspects of computer games that are not central to the main reason that we buy them.

We buy computer games to entertain ourselves. But is there an entertainment value percentage in CRASH or in any other Spectrum games magazines? Ha! Not likely! Graphics and sound seem to be the only things that matter, not more long-term aspects such as plot and player involvement (addictiveness etc), which I believe are much more relevant to the entertainment value of a game. I think it's sad when a technically better game is bought in preference to a game which has a better plot and offers more involvement.

Now I come to what I want CRASH to do about it. Don't let your reviewers be dazzled by beautiful sprites and boppy music; let them concentrate on how much they would want to play the game in a month's time. An entertainment value rating would be useful too.
Adrian Walker, Cork, Eire

I guess we don't think of entertainment as a separate entity because the whole review is about entertainment. Certainly the lasting appeal of a game is a prime consideration, although to be fair you can't expect CRASH reviewers to actually play any game for that kind of time to assess its real lasting appeal, or we wouldn't have any reviews done in time! Addictive qualities have to be assessed through experience and taste – an we can get it wrong now and then.
LM

A SWIFT REPLY

Dear Lloyd,
I am a very satisfied Disciple owner and I feel I should complain about several points in Simon Goodwin's review of Swift Disc in issue 44.

His repetitive bickering about Disciple's system file is misleading. Firstly he says that Disciple can manage slower drives but you must load in the system file when you switch on. Personally I don't see the great hardship in typing RUN and enter when I switch on to gain the numerous benefits the use of a system file offers.

Then he claims that even though Disciple uses 780K per disc (an increase of 140K over the Swift) it needs some of this for its system file. This is true enough, though he misses out that this file is under 7K and only need be on one disc.

At the moment Disciple costs £15 more than Swift (though Rockfort were selling it for £70 at the PCW show). For that you get the extremely flexible Centronics printer port. This has totally standard connections and can work even with non-Epson compatible printers as it allows you to change any of its control codes when you first set the system up which makes it more flexible than Multiprint.

Simon Goodwin seems to twist the fact that Swift's RS232 is non-standard into a good thing. He then says you have to send off for an adaptor costing £15 so that you can actually use it. This brings the price up to that of Disciple, which also has two network ports and an extra joystick port and therefore seems to be better value for money.

Simon goes on to claim that Swift is easier to use than Disciple. How can typing a % sign be easier than typing a d? Swift does not seem to support Disciple's wild-card facilities either. Disciple also has other commands like POKE @, which is extremely useful and allows experienced users to set up interrupts and extended BASIC commands amongst other things.

Possibly the most important thing of all is the Independent Disciple User Group which keeps us up to date with new software and hardware developments and regularly publishes very useful programs and undocumented facilities of Disciple. Swift does not enjoy this sort of support.

I hope this has cleared up some areas of doubt and in future please tell Mr Goodwin to calm down when he reviews a new product and not to instantly chuck the opposition out of the window.
Shimon Young, Southend-on-Sea, Essex

One point, Shimon, which you overlook but Simon Goodwin made in his Issue 44 piece is: 'the Swift is . . . significantly more compatible with existing programs (than the Disciple)'. Also, for the record, the main point of the CRASH review was that both Swift Disc and Disciple are preferable to the +3 as a Spectrum disk drive – though since that review was written Romantic Robot's Multiface 3 has removed one of the main drawbacks of the +3. So too may the new Disciple Version 3-B – see the news item in Tech Niche.
LM

OLDEN DAYS

Dear Lloyd,
I am writing this letter to congratulate you and your staff (of course) on last month's magazine. It was great to see what CRASH looked like in ye olden days. I do not know of any mag which has done this before you. Also the demo tape given free with the mag was an excellent idea. I could not believe how many demos were given after seeing a rival mag (no names mentioned) just give one game free with their mag.

Although not everything is fine with this magazine. The price of the mag is now £1.25. Why? As you have gathered this reader is not happy by the rise in PRICE (sorry but that word rings a bell). But I suppose you could reassure me by telling me that there will be more pages, more reviews, more previews, more brilliant Oli drawings and more Maria Whittaker (COR!). Well to change the subject once more here is my selection of favourite 128K tunes:-

1. Nemesis The Warlock
2. Wizball
3. Zub
4. Amaurote
5. Tai-Pan
6. Saboteur II
7. Neverending Story (A Bugging Tune)

Stephen Price, Great Barr, Birmingham

(That's enough Maria Whittaker. - Man Ed) She sure is enough, and thank you for the tunes. I think the reasons given for the rise in price in Issue 46's editorial are clear enough, and unfortunately the rise was essential. If you want to compare CRASH to other magazines, still at £1, then I think you can say you already get more than they regularly offer. The real point is, though, that they almost certainly won't stay at a £1 for very much longer.
LM



RETURN TO SENDER

Dear Lloyd,
Well-presented, forthright, ahead of the others by leaps and bounds, intelligent, innovative, what can I say – my admiration knows no bounds. But enough about me.

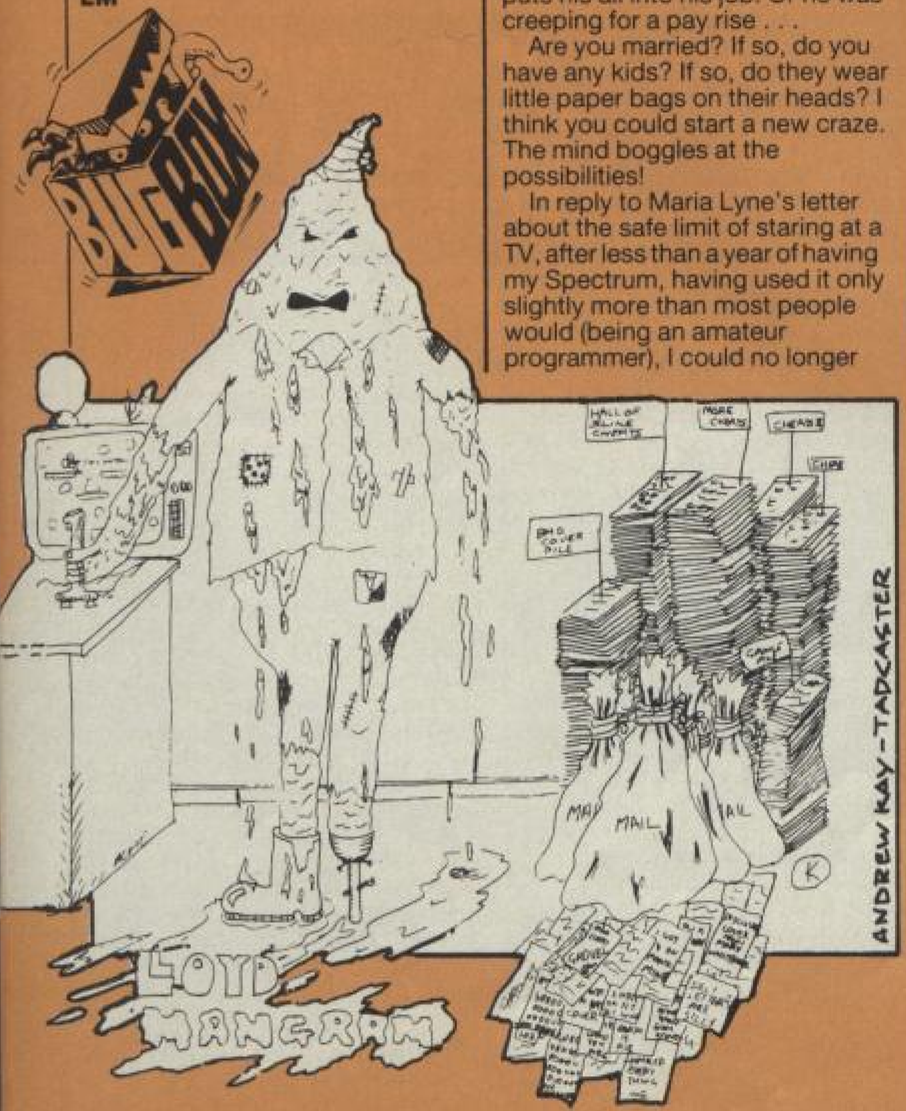
I'm glad to see that CRASH magazine is becoming more honest fun every week with less of that sensationalist yucky violence I was on the verge of complaining about.

I am very disappointed as I have written to your magazine several times and never had a letter printed. In fact I was so sure you wouldn't print those letters that I didn't send them. However, having boosted my ego at the beginning of this letter I may post this one.

Isn't it just typical, I know I had something important to say about the state of the computer industry and the amount of official arcade coin-op conversions on the market, or the lack of imaginative ideas flooding the market, or was it Alan Sugar taking the Spectrum devotees for £249 before admitting he always intended the +3 to cost £199. No I think it may have been the lack of disk-based software for the +3 which means you have to buy a tape recorder as well, or was it the sensationalist yucky violence in the industry after all. No, it's gone clean out of my mind so maybe I won't send this letter either.

Rubber Ducky, Nick Thompson, Ponterwyd, Dyfed

Well in that case I won't reply to it . . .
LM



SAMPLED UNDELIGHTS

Dear Lloyd,
I'm going to start with something which will probably be the subject of about five million of the five million and two letters you receive this month – The CRASH Sampler. I have mixed opinions on this subject. Anything that's free(ish) has got to be good, but personally I'd rather have one complete game (eg *Your Sinclair*'s *Batty*) than a C15 full of rubbish that, in the main doesn't do anything. What was the point of the *Sláine* thing? Was that meant to encourage me to buy it?

Staying on the subject of free gifts, this 3-D wotsit coming up next month, with the 25p price increase. I think it shows guts to put the price up before the other mags, but are all these free gifts really necessary? Surely as the most popular Spectrum mag, your reputation should be enough to get people to buy CRASH. Having said that, and being an admirer of Oli's work (And a hypocrite!), I'm looking forward to the feature.

From the future to the past, and still (sort of) with the subject of free gifts. The CRASH History feature. I like it, what more can I say?

Just to prove that I have got two brain cells to rub together, let me tell you about an idea I've just had (No 'beginner's luck' jokes!). Why not have an index of games hacked, as well as the Index of Reviews and the Index of Advertisers (Or even instead of the Advertisers' Index!).

Going back to Oli and his artistic talents, I think that the work he did on the *Game Over* advert shows that he has pride in his work, and puts his all into his job. Or he was creeping for a pay rise . . .

Are you married? If so, do you have any kids? If so, do they wear little paper bags on their heads? I think you could start a new craze. The mind boggles at the possibilities!

In reply to Maria Lyne's letter about the safe limit of staring at a TV, after less than a year of having my Spectrum, having used it only slightly more than most people would (being an amateur programmer), I could no longer see more than a blur of anything that was more than about a metre in front of my face. By the time I realized what was happening, it was too late, but I can't see any way of preventing things like this happening if you are sat in front of a VDU a lot. I didn't even have the opportunity to use a computer for eight hours a day, still being at school, and it happened to me.

I totally agree with Michael Thomas, except on the point of 16-year-olds being naive on politics. I'm a 13-year-old, and I'm not naive on politics, so he must live a pretty sheltered life (Mind you, he does live in Leamington Spa . . .).

And lastly, don't you listen to that Jon Ritman bloke! You must stand by your opinions! If you thought *Match Day* was rubbish, say so!

Still, I've run out of points, jokes, ink, paper, electricity, food, beer shandies and just about everything else, so I'll sign off with my cheap Sainsbury's Rollerball, leaving you with the cryptic comment: Glad you learned to count over 25; when you can count to 50 they might make you Ed . . .

Daniel Brice, the only literate Bristolian since 1952 (we're a dying breed), Kingswood, Bristol

The Sampler, judging by letters, obviously encouraged many to buy, buy, buy – and incidentally it was a C31, very expensive. The Man Ed (just turn another Page) tells me that there'll be a complete index of POKEs, tips and maps in Issue 49, following on from Issue 48's index of games reviewed. I never said we said Match Day *was rubbish, I said we didn't quite make it a Smash. Further, how could I see if the kids had paper bags on? I can't look down through those holes. And then, what comes after 49?*
LM

STRAIGHT FROM THE CHART

Dear Lloyd,
I am writing to you with my top ten tunes on the good old Spectrum 48K. So, let's not hang around; here they are:-

1. Trantor the Last Stormtrooper
2. Athena
3. Chronos
4. Agent X
5. Robin of the Wood
6. Nodes of Yesod
7. Pro Ski Simulator
8. Exolon
9. Zynaps
10. Angleball

Well, now that's over with, how about a chart for loading screens! My top five would be:-

1. Athena
2. Mean Streak
3. Road Runner
4. Robin of the Wood
5. Renegade

That's all for now - and keep on CRASHing.

Michael Turner, Stoke Gabriel, S Devon

I'm not sure whether the activity of writing for CRASH constitutes CRASHing. Which reminds me, I was once asked why the name CRASH was though of for a magazine – the answer was simple, after being turned down by an airline for their in-flight courtesy magazine, by the National Bus Company for similar reasons, by the Financial Times as their colour supplement and because we couldn't really become what Franco Frey most wanted – a new bright and hopeful car magazine, what else was left? You got it – computer games. C'est la vie. By the way, how about a chart of Your Top Ten Contrived Spectrum Subjects For Charts?
LM

So much for December (or actually, not quite as much as usual because there are so many other items in this issue that I've been 'compressed' (it's an editorial jargon word implying that normally you're long-winded and verbose – 'what me', I hear you cry – I do, don't I?). The address to send your Top Ten Contrived Spectrum Subjects For Charts to (plus anything else you can think of that might make a letter) is: LLOYD MANGRAM'S FORUM, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*. Next, it's Christmas . . .

KERRASH! N·E·W·S...

DK GETS RAMMED

RAM ELECTRONICS has taken over DK'Tronics's products. The manufacturer of the Music Machine has 'acquired all rights to manufacture and sell DK'Tronics branded products and is now the sole owner of the DK'Tronics brand name,' an official statement said.

Ram assures buyers that DK'Tronics products will 'continue to be available'.

WIDE BOY CROWS AS +3 SOFTWARE SWELLS

ALAN SUGAR'S much-derided notion of several games on a +3 disk has come true with Martech's *Four Top Games*. On one £14.99 disk are the new *Slaine* (review next issue), *Catch 23* (56% Overall in Issue 43), *Nemesis The Warlock* (61% in Issue 40) and *Pulsator* (66% in Issue 42,66%) – that's just £3.75 each!

Even cheaper is budget house Pirate Software's *Pirate 3 +3* at £9.95. Titles on that are *Call Me Psycho* (47% in Issue 46), *Holiday In Sumaria* (16% in Issue 46) and *Smash Out!* (11% in Issue 46).

Software Publishing Associates, Pirate's parent company, is also putting full-pricers like *Erik: Phantom Of The Opera* (based on Gaston Leroux's classic horror novel, and out November 27) on +3 disk – at a two-quid premium. That one's £9.95 on disk but just £7.95 on tape.

US Gold has also announced its support for the new machine with *Gauntlet*, *World Class Leaderboard* and *Outrun* due for disk release before Christmas at £12.99 each.

And on the utilities front, Tasman's word processor *Tasword* is available for the +3 at £19.95. It's 'the most comprehensive version of *Tasword* ever released for the ZX Spectrum,' the manufacturers claim.

Backing up Amstrad boss Sugar's scheme to make disk software viable – the actual three-inch disks are pricy, at £1.75 each earlier this year, and having just one game on each wastes pounds' worth of memory – Martech's David Martin said 'we believe people who buy the +3 will be looking for good quality titles in a single value-for-money package'.

Meanwhile, despite being called the 'Arthur Daley of the computer world' on a late October *Wogan* show, Sugar has other reasons to be pleased – his Amstrad was named 'Britain's fastest-growing company' by *Business* magazine.

The survey of 500 top firms showed that in the year 1986-87 Sugar's electronics giant, which bought the rights to the Spectrum from Sir Clive Sinclair's Sinclair Research in April 1986, had a turnover of £304 million – that's 123% up on last year.

£75,284,000 of that was profit (before tax), making Amstrad the country's 107th most profitable company too.

► **Amstrad Chairman Alan Sugar: 'Arthur Daley of the computer world'**



CHILDLINE JOINS COMPUTER CHARITY CROWD

ESTHER RANTZEN'S charity for children in danger, Childline, is appealing for secondhand software – to raise funds for a 'free year-round telephone service for children in need'. Software donations or enquiries should go to: The Software Appeal, *4 Kilmartin Lane, Carluke, Lanarkshire ML8 5RT*.

Childline's appeal comes just after the release of *Kidsplay* on the Back Pack label, a charity compilation which organisers hope will raise £270,000 for the National Society For The Prevention Of Cruelty To Children (see CRASH news story in Issue 43). The Back Pack team raised over £1,000 of that on their stand at The *PCW* Show – though trade reports suggest it's not been as successful as previous software fund-raisers.

Also at The *PCW* Show was a Jensen car covered in Domark logos, which took part in a 'treasure hunt' from London to Monte Carlo – sponsored by Domark as part of a fund-raising event called An Extremely Trivial Pursuit. It didn't win, but contributed to the £30,000 raised to help drug-users at the London-based Chemical Dependency Centre.

The Worcester branch of the Cancer Research Campaign is hoping to involve celebrities in its 72-hour nonstop game-playing marathon on December 18 – and any champion keyboard-bashers strong enough to take part should contact Mrs B Ludwig at *4 Athelstan Road, Worcester* or ring Worcester (0905) 354109.

And those 75,000 Micronet and Prestel networkers are tuned in to the charity act too – organisers of the TV and radio Children In Need appeal on November 27 will be connected to both, and to Information Technology Centres.

There'll be donations and auctions on the networks; viewers can see Wogan's pretty face or Sue Cook's prettier one giving a running total of the cash as it comes over the lines.

CHRIS HOLLAND

JUST THINK



What if you could buy all these hit games in a special pack for the price of one...Wouldn't that be fantastic?

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Wouldn't that be sensational?



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TIE-INS PART ONE

FROM SCREEN TO SCREEN – TV AND FILM TIE-INS

Tie-ins – dontcha just love 'em???!!!

From The Hobbit **to** Judge Death, **from** Invasion Of The Body Snatchas **to** Star Wars, **games have been based on books and films and comics and cartoons and TV series and famous names and – well, just about anything you can buy a licence to.**

Successful tie-ins translate a passively readable or watchable story into a playable game. But others are rip-offs, simply using a famous name to boost sales.

ROBIN CANDY's been through them all, and in this first half of a two-part article he reviews the film and TV tie-ins.

Next month: tie-ins with books, comics, cartoons and celebrities, plus some that never were.

THEY'VE been around a while. In early 1984, a tie-in earned CRASH's Game Of The Month award for the first time: in *Blue Thunder* (90% Overall in Issue 3), which had been both a film and a TV series, the player controls the infamous jetcopter and has to rescue prisoners by destroying a reactor and thus switching off a force field. Neither game nor TV series has any real plot, and I have to admit I was disappointed with it. But programmer Richard Wilcox, whose company Richard Wilcox Software published *Blue Thunder*, went on to cofound Elite – source of many tie-ins.

In Issue 8 came Compusound's *Block Buster* (76%), a quiz game derivative of the TV series of the same name. It's quite like *Trivial Pursuit*, with the player answering general-knowledge questions. Fans of quiz games enjoyed *Block Buster*, but it isn't well-presented even for its time.

Block Buster wasn't on general release for long, because it wasn't officially licensed, and after legal action the game was withdrawn. Later it reappeared as *Wender Bender*, and in early 1985 a licensed and improved version was released by Macsen Software (82% in Issue 13).

Richard Wilcox Software had specialised in licensed games from the very start, and after members of the Wilcox family had set up Elite Software the new company released *The Fall Guy* (76% in Issue 12). The player controls Colt Seavers, stunt-man hero of the TV series. In the game, a low budget for Seaver's productions means all the stunts have to be pulled off as quickly as possible! It's okay, and compared to some of Elite's other tie-ins *The Fall Guy* does have a connection with its origin.

A few months later Elite gained a real tie-in Smash with *Airwolf* (90% in Issue 13), based on the high-tech TV series – but only just. The game follows Stringfellow Hawke's attempts to free five top US scientists from a subterranean base, and the player guides the helicopter through the caverns. It is a good game, but has very little to do with the TV series other than involving a helicopter.

ZEBEDEE MEETS THE GHOSTBUSTERS

Magic Roundabout used to be compulsory viewing in late afternoons, and the antics of Zebedee et al were a joy to watch. CRL snapped up the licence. The star of the game (51% in Issue 12) is Dougal, who has to build a house by pushing sugar cubes around the screen before bedtime. The graphics are nice enough, but the game doesn't recreate the atmosphere of the TV series, though *Magic Roundabout* was obviously aimed at the younger games-players.

'I ain't afraid of no ghost' went up the cry in Issue 13 as Activision released *Ghostbusters* (60%), which the company claimed was the best-selling game ever. (It's sold over 250,000 copies, though this year Ocean's film licence *Top Gun* has almost overtaken that.) The Commodore 64 version had been a big hit (like the film comedy), largely because of the incredible soundtrack and speech; the game itself is very easy to complete and not addictive. The object is to clean the city of ghosts, picking up and using such objects as a ghost vacuum! The gameplay is closely based on the film, but there's so little to actually do that *Ghostbusters* is boring and loses all its attraction without the soundtrack.

In April 1985 Elite released another TV tie-in, *The Dukes Of Hazzard* (63% in Issue 15). Set in the southern USA, like the series, the scenario has Boss Hogg threatening to take General Lee from the Duke boys unless they can come up with the $5,000 they owe him. Coincidentally, a race is announced with the prize money at $5,000 so the Duke boys enter it in a bid to keep General Lee . . . meanwhile, the police are out to stop them.

The Dukes Of Hazzard is basically a variant on the well-worn *Moon Buggy* games. And it's rather a bore, with reasonable graphics but no addictive gameplay. This tie-in is a bit of a gimmick: remove the scenario and there isn't much, except the General Lee graphics, to connect the game with the TV series.

Quicksilva's licensed computer game of 20th Century Fox's film *Fantastic Voyage* (78% in Issue 16) takes the player swimming inside someone's body, trying to destroy a malignant growth and collect the pieces of a miniaturised submarine to get back out of the body before time ran out.

The 1966 film was about a group of doctors miniaturised so that they could journey around a seriously ill scientist and repair the damaged body (a remake called *Inner Space* is in the pipeline – or should that be the aorta?). The game follows the film in many areas, though it's nothing special.

DODGY DEALINGS

Journeys around the body may seem a strange basis for a game, but the hit TV series *Minder* was just as unlikely a candidate for conversion. The only way to base a game on the TV series would have been to include plenty of dodgy dealings – and that was exactly what DK'Tronics's *Minder* (75% in Issue 17) involved. The player controls Arthur Daley in a 15-day spree of wheeling and dealing, trying to make as much profit as possible.

As an adaptation of the TV series *Minder* is very good, featuring most of the main characters (including Sergeant Chisholme, always on the prowl at the Winchester Club); the only letdown is that Terry McCann, the delivery man, only plays a minor role. Programmer Don Priestley made *Minder* interesting, giving the characters memories so you have to treat them correctly if you want to make deals with them. But it doesn't hold the interest for long.

Adventure International jumped into the film-licensing market with *Gremlins* (Issue 17; an adventure, so no percentage), an official tie-in with Steven Spielberg's hugely successful family movie. With the aid of cute little Gizmo, the player has to annihilate the Gremlins running riot in Kingston Falls.

Programmer Brian Howarth added extra scenes to the main parts of the film to make it a little harder, but knowledge of the film is a great help, especially in the opening sequences.

The astounding thing in *Gremlins* is the very high-quality graphics, with occasional animation adding to the atmosphere. The graphics also serve a purpose, giving clues which aren't in the text. It's good without being outstanding, most enjoyable if you've seen and liked the film.

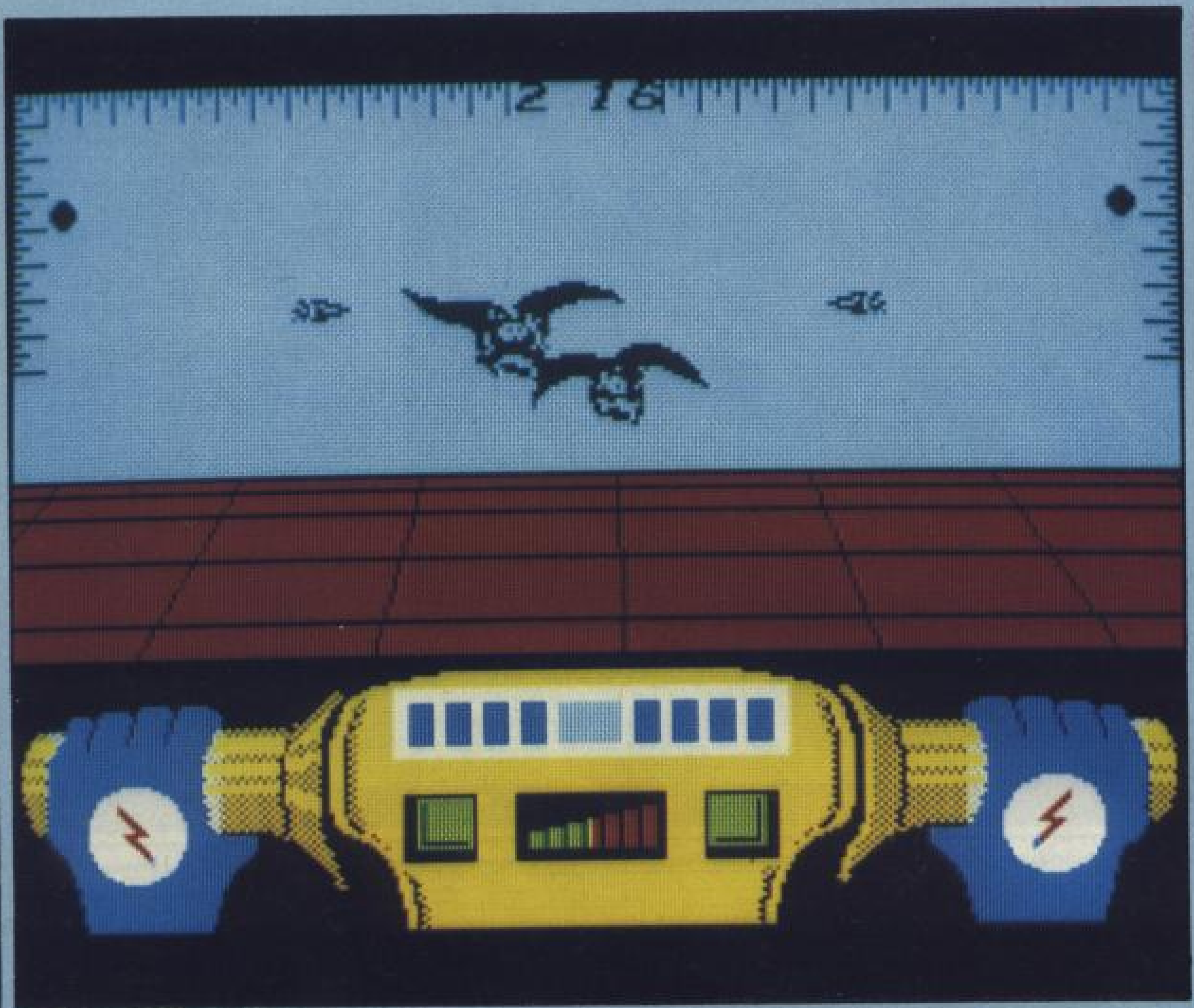
VERY CLEVER, BUT NOT CLEVER ENOUGH

Inevitably, James Bond eventually found his way into the bowels of a computer in the summer of 1985. The suave secret agent's high-speed adventures lend themselves well to a game, so Domark snapped up the licence for *A View To A Kill* and Bond made his Spectrum debut in Issue 18 (scoring 76%), at much the same time as the film appeared.

The game of *A View To A Kill* is divided into three sections, each based on an action-packed scene from the film. In the first Bond is driving around Paris trying to locate the place where the assassin May Day will land; in the second, set in San Francisco, Bond must rescue himself and his girlfriend Stacy from a burning building; and in the third Bond enlists May Day's help, attempting to find a bomb and defusing it.

These subgames were based on episodes in the film, but the effect is disappointing. *A View To A Kill* isn't really action-packed, and poor presentation reduces our hero to an unrecognisable stick character.

Bond appeared again earlier this year in Domark's *The Living Daylights* (63% in Issue 43), at the same time as the film, which was much hyped because of Timothy Dalton's debut as Bond. It's split into eight levels, loosely based on the film's action sequences; but they're all very similar, with parallax scrolling which messes up the nice graphics. And though much of the film is there,



▶ *Flash Gordon*: **how not to treat a superhero**

somewhere along the line its atmosphere was lost.

Of course the Bond films are themselves 'tie-ins' with Ian Fleming's Fifties novels and stories, though today the movies are better-known.

HOW TO SHOCK YOUR GRAN

CRL brought *The Rocky Horror Show* (79% in Issue 18) out of the late-night cinemas and alternative theatres. A cult stage play and film in the States and Britain, *The Rocky Horror Show* centres on the adventures of the all-American wimp Brad and his girlfriend Janet in the home of Dr Frank'n'Furter, a 'sweet transvestite from transsexual Transylvania'.

The game is in the same madcap style as the stage show (where people in the audience dress up as their favourite *Rocky Horror* characters and shower the stage with items such as Kit Kats) and film, though it doesn't stick to the story.

The player can choose to be either Brad or Janet, but it doesn't really make any difference; whichever character you are, you have to collect parts of the De-Medusa machine to free the other one. If time runs out the house blasts off into space (told you it's madcap . . .), ending the game.

There's not much to *The Rocky Horror Show*; it's enjoyable but easy to complete. Still, it recreates the atmosphere of the show right down to the Timewarp dance, just a jump to the left . . .

There was another kind of bizarreness in Issue 18 in Tynesoft's *Super Gran*, based on the TV-series exploits of the jet-powered geriatric. It was a terrible show and the game (43%) followed suit, with very low-resolution graphics and awful sound. And it wasn't really connected with the TV series – the tie-in seemed like an excuse to boost sales of a very poor game.

BUCK ROGERS IN THE TWENTIETH ISSUE

Space adventurer Buck Rogers was a superhero of low-budget films in the Thirties, but US Gold's licence *Buck Rogers And The Planet Of Zoom* was unsuccessful on the Commodore 64 and the Spectrum conversion in autumn 1985 didn't do much better, making just 67% in Issue 20.

The player pilots Buck's spaceship through five progressively harder levels, destroying anything that happens to get in the way. There's no link with any Buck Rogers story – a pity, because the character provided plenty of scope for a good game.

US Gold returned to screen licences with *Zorro* (53% in Issue 26). Originally a swashbuckling hero of Thirties pulp fiction, Zorro had starred in a series of B-movies, a TV series, and comics. The 18th-century swordsman made a living out of defending the innocent and upholding justice, like Batman but without the high-tech gadgetry and rubber-shark repellent – instead he made do with his trusty foil and left 'Zorro' emblazoned on the backsides of fat Mexicans.

The game wasn't terribly good, though it kept to the spirit of the shows, with plenty of swordfighting and the odd puzzle. But the idea was let down by poor presentation and thin gameplay.

5, 4, 3, 2, 1 . . .

Thunderbirds are go! The TV puppet series beloved of many came to the Spectrum as a Firebird cheapie, but *Thunderbirds* (64% in Issue 23) revolves around the high-tech Thunderbird rescue vehicles themselves rather than the characters that pilot them.

A group of Egyptologists trapped in the deep recesses of a tomb manages to contact Thunderbird 5 (the one in space), which in turn scrambles Thunderbirds 1 and 2. But after the excellent demo of the two Thunderbirds' blastoff, the game reverts to a logic puzzle – strangely compelling, but not living up to expectations created by the name Thunderbirds.

The Neverending Story was a great idea for a movie, but the German film of 1985 is let down by poor scriptwriting and acting – and Ocean's adventure (7 out of 10 in Issue 26) is atmospheric but flawed, too. As the hero Atreyu, the player is sent to save the land of Fantasia and its Empress from all-consuming nothingness *(sounds like a night on the town in little Ludlow - Man Ed)*. Knowing the film does help in playing the game, but it's not essential, because the problems are logical enough.

There's not much logic in Ocean's *Rambo* (79% in Issue 26) – like the film, it's distinctly lacking in plot. And unlike the film, the game can't hide this with special effects. *Rambo* followed the film's theme: the eponymous American soldier played by Sylvester Stallone on the screen kills anything that moves, and rescues some poor bedraggled prisoner. Extra weapons such as a bow and a rocket-launcher annihilate the surroundings as well as the enemy.

Rambo plays exactly like a *Commando* variant, though it's not as good as Elite's original; disappointing, when you consider all the other ways to go about portraying a mindless killer.

BRUCIE, MAX AND THE ELECTRIC SHEEP

Fortunately game shows don't get converted into computer games that often, but Britannia Software brought *Play Your Cards Right* (38% in Issue 27) to the Spectrum, following the TV show very closely – though the player is only subjected to the odd glimpse of Bruce Forsyth. It's a fair representation of the guessing-game show, but there's not much to do, and as there are no real prizes the hysteria of the TV series just vanishes.

CRL couldn't get the licence to the 1982 futuristic film *Blade Runner* (itself based on Philip K Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep?*) – so the software house picked up the licence for the soundtrack! But the game did bear uncanny similarities to the film. For instance, in the game the 21st-century bounty-hunter has to hunt down replidroids, manufactured organisms that resemble humans and have been banned from Earth, while in the film Harrison Ford is on the trail of deadly replicants.

Blade Runner (the game – 58% in Issue 27) consists of locating the replidroids, chasing them through the streets and destroying them before they cause too much damage. It's boring and repetitive, but the title-screen music is very good . . .

Almost two years before *Blade Runner* was released, CRL's *War Of The Worlds* (46% in Issue 7, a dull and primitive arcade adventure) had also been based on music – on Jeff Wayne's LP version of the H G Wells novel, rather than the 1952 film or Orson Welles's famous radio broadcast!

A computer-generated TV megastar had to come to the Spectrum screen sooner or later, so in the early summer of 1986 Quicksilva released Binary Designs's *Max Headroom* (85% in Issue 18). It's not really based on the TV series, having more in common with the TV film that introduced us all to the stuttering pundit. The player controls ace TV reporter Edison Carter on a mission to rescue Max Headroom from the Network 23 TV station, avoiding security robots and cracking entry codes.

On rescuing Max, you're treated to a few digitised words from the pixel star himself. It's a good game, but a strange implementation of a tricky subject: after all, Max is little more than a wisecracking chat-show host. ▶

ATTACK OF THE KILLER TIE-INS

Attack Of The Killer Tomatoes is universally held as one of the worst movies ever made. But Global produced a very good game of the film (89% in Issue 28); like the original, it focuses on Wimp Plasbot's attempt to rid the planet of mutated vegetables. It's a 3-D room game in the same style as *Knight Lore*, and bears more than a few similarities to Ultimate's earlier Smash.

Michael J Fox made his Spectrum debut with help from Electric Dreams as the star of *Back To The Future* (42% in Issue 28). Like the American film of 1985, it's about an American kid (Marty McFly, played by teen heart-throb Fox) who, thanks to a mad professor, gets transported back to the Fifties – to the time that his parents were getting together.

Mucking about with the past has huge consequences, and Marty almost alters the course of history so his parents don't meet – then he has to spend most of the film making sure they do get together.

In the game you control Marty, and must make his future parents spend as much time together as possible so love will run its true course and Marty will be born in the future. Your success is gauged by a family photograph, almost complete when you're doing well.

Back To The Future makes sense if you've seen the film, but poor programming and presentation let it down tremendously. The idea, especially the use of icons, was good but badly implemented.

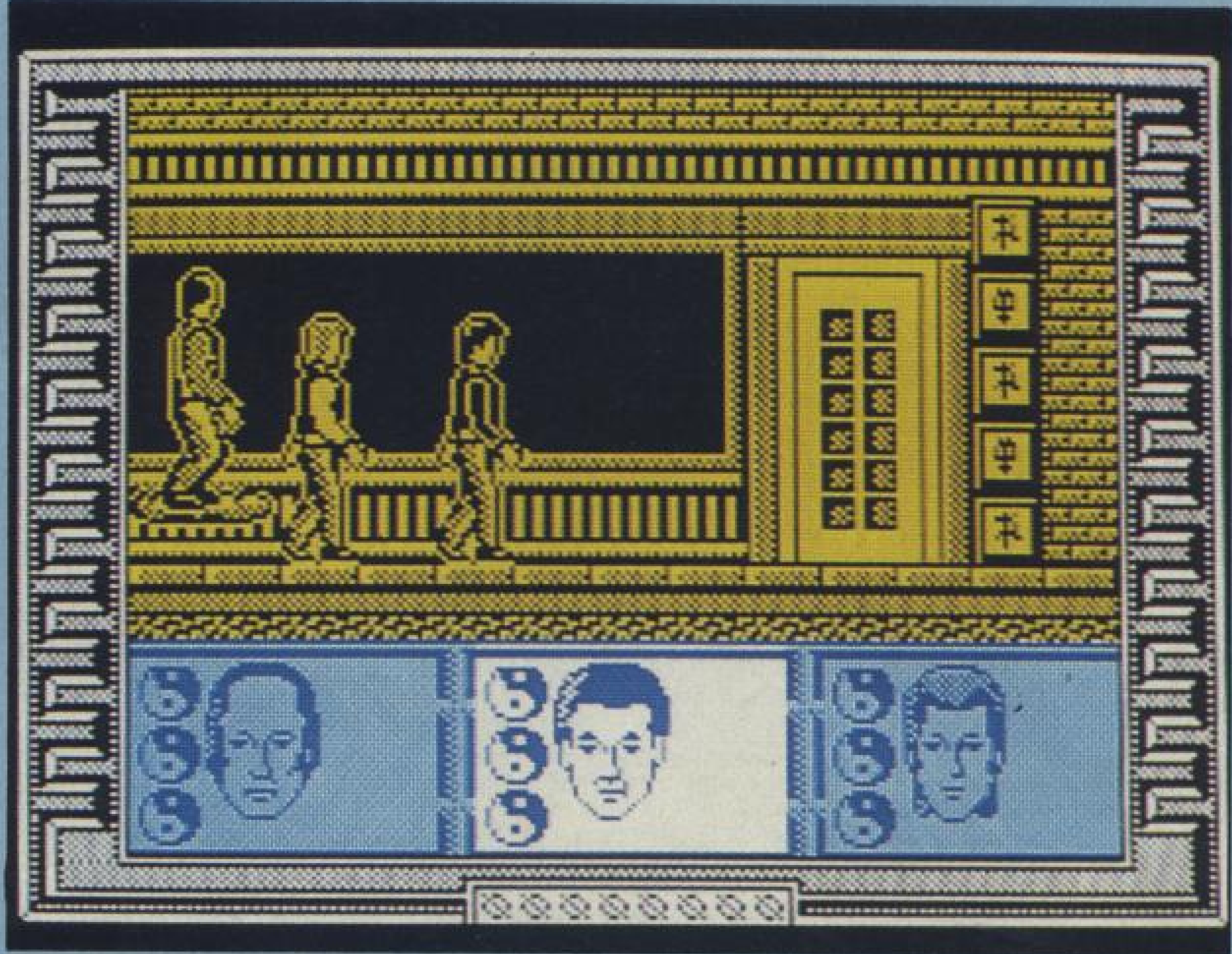
GIVING IT THE V

I always liked the first series of *V*, TV's saga of everyday aliens, but the second killed off most of the cast and degenerated into nothing more than a space soap. In Ocean's game (70% in Issue 29) Michael Donavan has managed to board the alien mother ship to plant bombs and wipe out the visitors; but Diana, leader of the lizard-like aliens, has sent out her robot armies to thwart you (for it is you).

There's not much to do in this horizontally-scrolling game, and *V* seems to have very little connection with the TV series: for a start, there's no sign of the



eponymous visitors. It's a shame Ocean couldn't have made more of *V*, because despite being a laughable programme it provided



plenty of scope for high-speed shoot-'em-ups.

CRASH reviewed *The Young Ones* from Orpheus, based on Adrian Edmondson's madcap TV comedy, in the same month as *V* (it got 42%). The player chooses which of the four characters he wants to be, and from then on all you have to do is collect that character's belongings, selecting commands from a list of choices such as 'walk' and 'talk'. There's not much unusual in *The Young Ones* apart from a few swear words, and like the gameplay the tie-in is virtually nonexistent.



'THE ONE YOU'VE BEEN SCREAMING FOR'

After a blaze of hype that lasted months and hundreds of freebie plastic knives, Domark's *Friday The 13th* was finally released in the summer of 1986. The 1980 horror film (and its four sequels) had scared many people, but this licence didn't even raise a whimper and earned only 32% in Issue 29.

It follows on from where the first film left off: at a camping resort you have to save the other campers from the psychotic Jason before he bumps them and yourself off. However, even the chain-saw-wielding failed to impress. This crude game with its terrible graphics is one of the worst tie-ins ever.

Several months after it was first advertised, Ocean's *Knight Rider* made a somewhat undramatic entrance at the Towers. Michael Knight and Kitt are united in their battle against terrorists out to start World War III – but since nobody knows where the terrorists actually are you've got to drive around America like a mad thing collecting clues. It's a drab game, not much like the TV series, and the reviewers thought the year-long wait wasn't worth it; *Knight Rider* got just 39% in Issue 34.

The following month, Ocean finally pushed out a complete version of *Street Hawk* after an 18-month wait (68% in Issue 34). There are two stages: the first consists of riding down the high street killing car-loads of criminals but avoiding innocent bystanders, and the second stage is a *Missile Command*-style shoot-out at a liquor store.

Street Hawk is very simplistic, like the story lines of the TV series. Graphically it's above average, but the lack of screens and action let the game down tremendously.

I never rated Steven Spielberg's film *Goonies* very highly; the special effects are good, but there's no excitement in the plot. US Gold's licensed version turned up a year ago (60% in Issue 35). It's essentially a platform game where the player guides two Goonies to a secret exit at the other side of the screen, but cooperation is the

name of the game: your two Goonies must interact with each other for the mission to be successful. *Goonies* is a straightforward platform game with very little to do with the film.

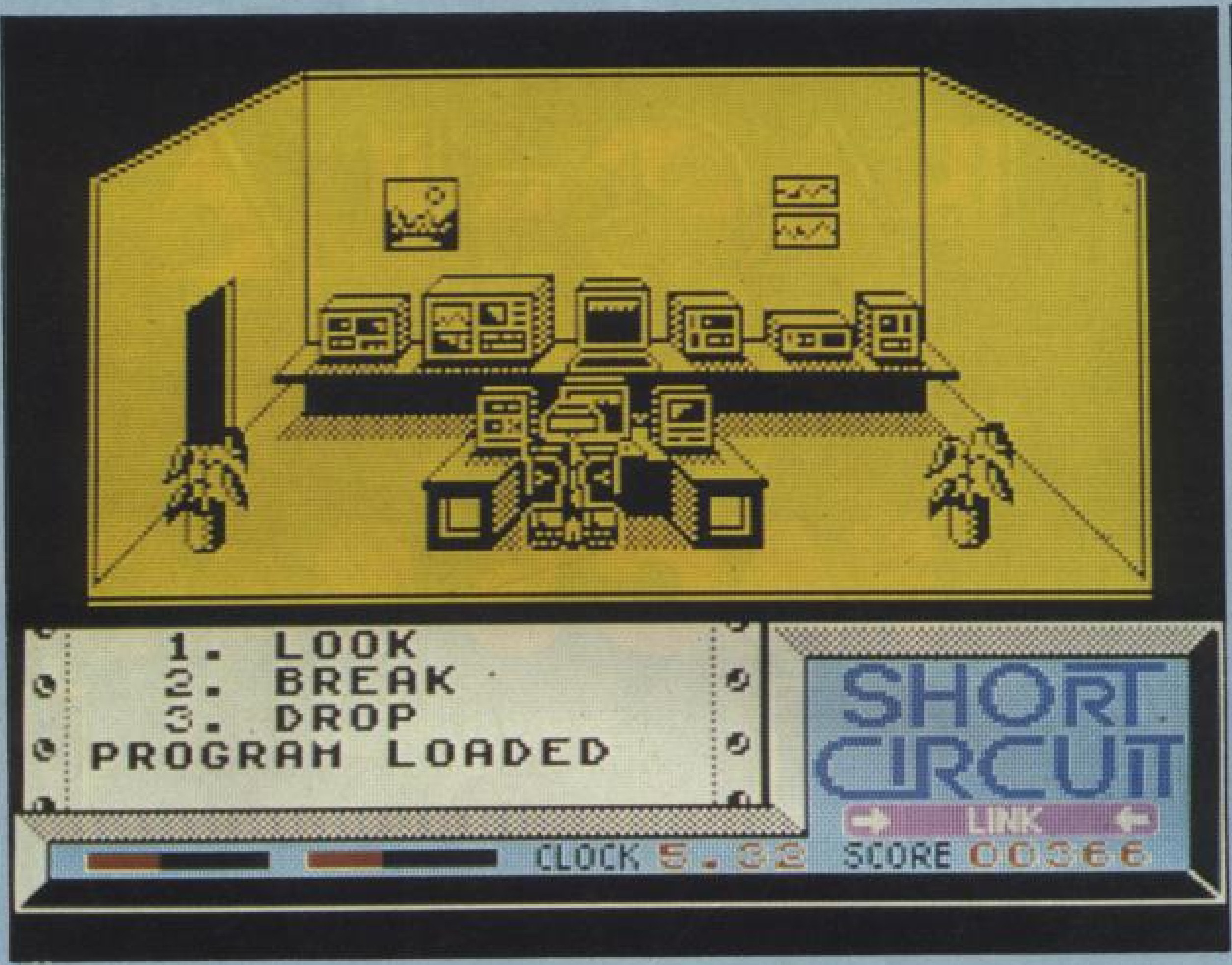
MORE FROM THE SILVER SCREEN

By 1986, software houses were bidding for the game rights to any big film release as soon as it appeared. A few months after the film *Cobra*, Ocean's game appeared (93% in Issue 35). The player has to rescue top model Ingrid Knutsen from a band of deadly killers and the Night Slasher, but to start with you haven't any weapons and your sole means of defence is your deadly head butt.

Considering that the main feature of the Stallone movie is killing, Ocean's game is a very good conversion – mindless but enjoyable, in much the same style as Imagine's *Green Beret* but far better. And the music is some of the best ever created for the sound-starved Spectrum. *Cobra* made up for Ocean failures like *Street Hawk* and *Knight Rider*.

Sequels tend not to be as good as their originals, but with the film *Aliens* director Ridley Scott managed to improve on the gripping formula that had made *Alien* a huge hit. Electric Dreams acquired the licence, and Mark Eyles designed the game, which conveys the frantic pace and terror that the film portrays so well. The strategy elements are nicely offset by an arcade pace, and *Aliens* would have been a Smash but for the few idiosyncrasies that the reviewers felt flawed it.

Just this month, Electric Dreams released the US version of *Aliens* – there's a (not very enthusiastic) review on page 14.





THE FLOODGATES OPEN

Issue 37 is an issue of licences, most from Ocean. *Highlander* (57%), based on the 1986 film starring Christopher Lambert, portrays the battle through the ages of a group of immortals in competition for The Prize. By virtue of their immortality, they can only be killed by being beheaded . . .

Ocean's game leaves out most of the film's story line and centres on the fight sequences instead. In the game McLeod (the Lambert character) has three opponents to defeat before The Prize can be his, each one harder to kill than the previous; the Canvas programmers produced nothing more than a beat-'em-up with swords.

The need to load each opponent separately is annoying, and graphically *Highlander* is very clumsy: the programmers used extended pixels, making the characters appear blocky and awkward. The two-player option is one redeeming feature, but *Highlander* failed to capture the movie's spirit.

Also in Issue 37, Ocean's *Top Gun* was a Smash at 90%. Again, the game neglected the story line of the film (much of its success had been due to pin-up star Tom Cruise), and the main connection between the two was F14 combat planes. But the quality of the product made it more acceptable.

Top Gun is a flight simulator with more gameplay than others of its ilk – the object is simply to blast your opponent out of the sky. Programmer Mike Lamb uses split-screen techniques to depict the cockpits of two opposing aircraft, and the two-player head-to-head combat option is the real highlight of this enjoyable tie-in.

Ocean's final licence of the month was *It's A Knockout* (39%), which presented five wacky events including flan-flinging – followed the theme of the notorious TV series, with all those games to make the players very wet or very messy and sometimes both. *It's A Knockout* is played like Ocean's Daley Thompson sports simulations, though it's hardly so enjoyable – this tie-in is quite close to its original, but perhaps the real-life TV mayhem is untranslatable to the computer.

RECENT HISTORY

The film licences have been divided fairly evenly between Electric Dreams and Ocean, the former bringing on *Big Trouble In Little China* (67% in Issue 40) just a few months ago.

The high-speed action film directed by John Carpenter (best known for spooky thrillers like *The Fog* and *The Thing*) relates the rescue efforts of Jack Burton and Wang Chi, whose green-eyed girlfriends have been kidnapped by the skinless Mandarin Lo Pan. In the game the player controls three characters, each with different abilities, one at a time: the heroes Jack Burton and Wang Chi and their friend Egg Shen.

Big Trouble In Little China is basically a beat-'em-up with a few extras, and it's not as funny as the film. As in *Cobra*, the best thing is the music.

At much the same time, Ocean released *Short Circuit* (71% in Issue 40). Like the film, it chronicled a robot's attempts to escape from a bunch of scientists who want to pull it apart and discover how it's assumed human qualities. *Short Circuit* is divided into two separate sections, the first a collecting game and the second an arcade dash – both enjoyable, though they have little to do with the actual film.

Grange Hill, Phil Redmond's hit TV series of everyday comprehensive life, became an adventure from Argus Press Software (70% in Issue 40). As Goncho, you try to retrieve your Walkman from school after it's confiscated in a lesson. The programmers tried hard to avoid *Grange Hill* being pigeonholed, combining both arcade and adventure elements.

But considering that five programmers are credited, *Grange Hill* is dull and a great disappointment, despite being based on a *Grange Hill* story.

Activision's *Howard The Duck* (61% in Issue 41) cast the player as the eponymous duck, with a mission to rescue Phil and Beverly from the clutches of the Dark Overlord. The game closely follows the main sequences of the film – which isn't much good in the first place.

Finally, Flash Gordon, the 25th-century hero of Thirties comic strips and films, got his own game this summer. But graphics and gameplay are appalling in M.A.D.'s version (42% in Issue 43), where (as usual) Flash has 24 hours to save the earth by getting through several levels and defeating the merciless Ming. It's a shame such a well-known hero is represented so crudely – but then it's a strange transition from screen to screen, and tie-ins have always been a mixed blessing.

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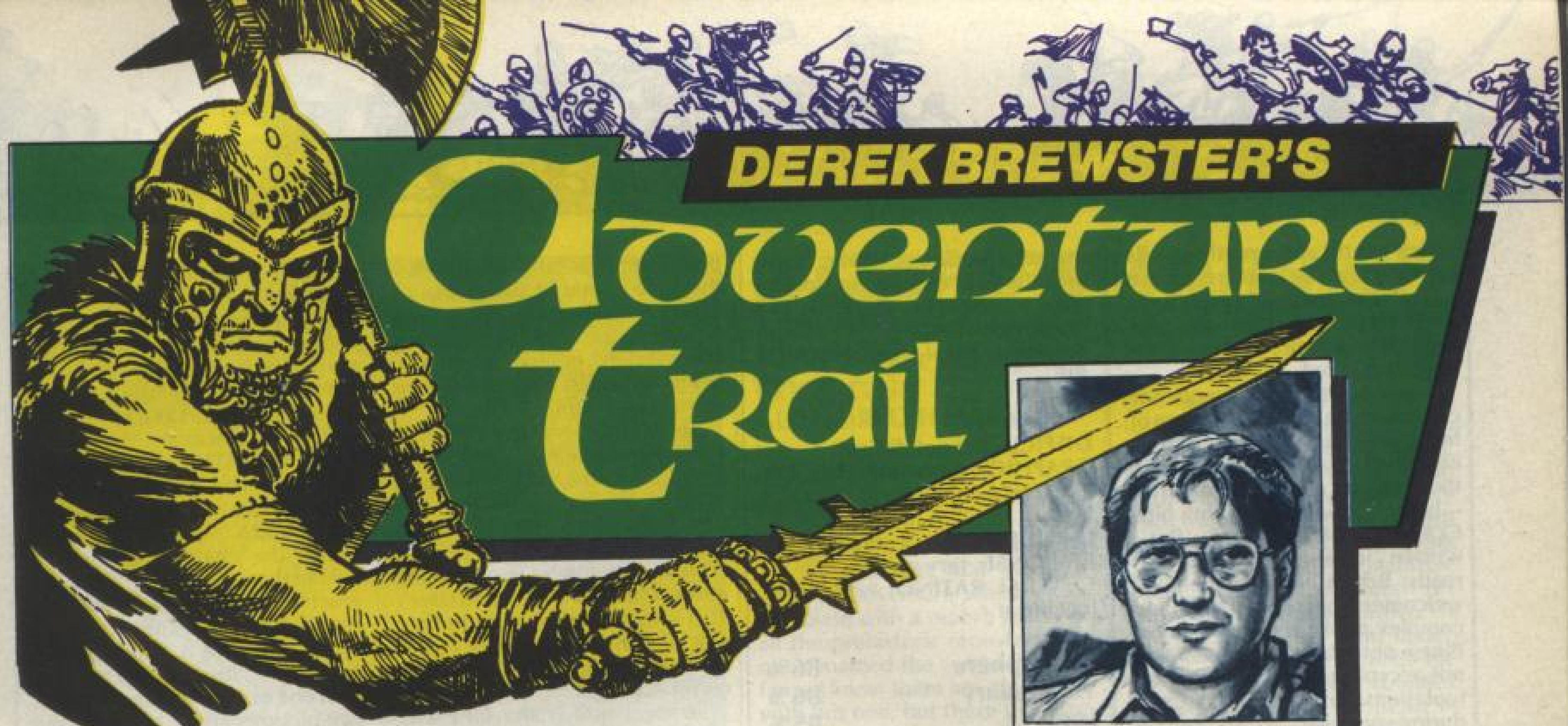
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THE GODS OF WAR

PRODUCER: Nebula Designs
PRICE: £7.75
AUTHORS: Mark Cantrell and Ted King

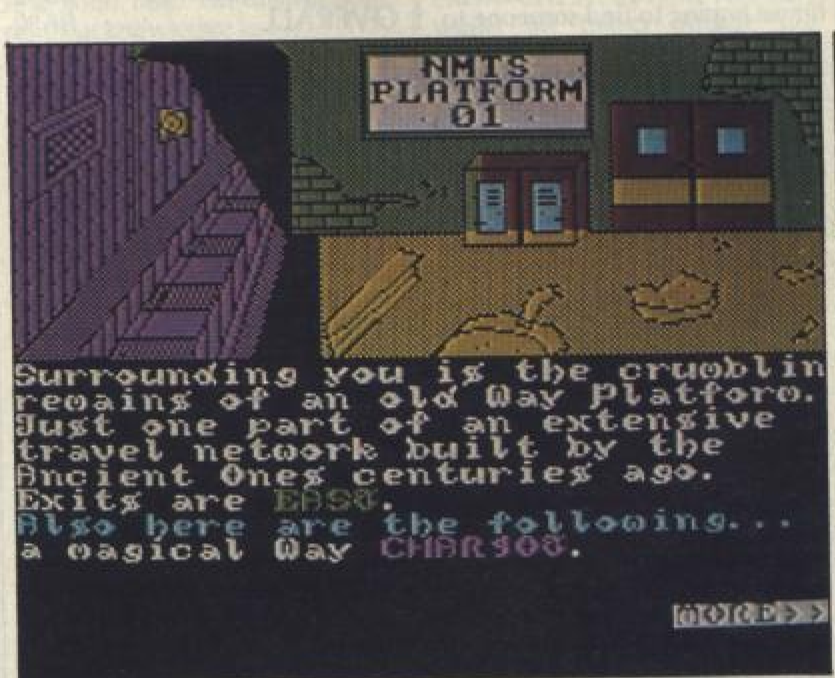
This fine adventure set in Britain after a nuclear holocaust comes in 48K and 128K versions; they're very similar but the 128K version has longer location descriptions and EXAMINE reports. And the solution to the larger-memory game is subtly different in a number of ways – enough to have you scratching your head if you attempt both versions. More obviously, the character sets are different too, and I preferred the less elaborate but more readable set of the 48K version.

The Gods Of War is rather a good game by any standards, with a reliable, if overused, theme. The story is better than the usual doomsday scenario – there's even a bit of north-versus-south, with many curious twists, thrown in for good measure.

A global nuclear war has destroyed our civilisation. Over the years the survivors have moved away from the ruins and established a new Dark Ages culture, where the old nuclear warheads represent the earthbound forms of the gods.

The player enters the game two years after a race of Mutts (mutants) have invaded the Southern Kingdoms of England and conquered them using ancient sorcery – all technology is seen as sorcery. These Mutts now threaten the final free kingdom in the north of Britain, which will be destroyed unless their plans are thwarted. The player's quest is to frustrate the Mutts' attempt to rule the north, ensuring its freedom so it can eventually go on to liberate the invaded kingdom in the south.

Many of the game's strengths derive from Gilsoft's *Professional Adventure Writer*, with which it was written. *The Gods Of War* has an excellent response time, superb manipulation of vocabulary, and the kind of location descriptions and elaborations of plot which come easily to a 128K *PAW* adventure.



▶ Through the crumbled civilisation you struggle to save what remains

But this is not to belittle the authors' input – the writing style is very good, and only the occasional grammatical slip-up has got past the proofreading stage. Adjectives abound, as in this 48K-version answer to OPEN HATCH (you rather groaningly begin with a hatch key!): 'The ancient hatch lifts open with a protesting screech breaking the seals on the ancient portal. The stale stench of death rushes up from the ancient hatch making you retch.'

And we get some indication of the clever story line, as well as of the effectiveness of the EXAMINE command, in this 128K-version excerpt taken from after EXAMINE MONEY at the Druid's Tax Collectors Camp: 'There are several round discs in them, the usual currency found in the kingdoms, and some nuggets and jewellery. They are made of plastic, an ancient material forged in the cauldrons of the Ancient Ones and very valuable due to its scarcity outside the ruins. More people gained possession of plastic after the Mutts conquered the Southern Kingdoms. They brought great quantities with them to trade in the villages and ale houses where their currency, heavy, strangely inscribed metal discs, are of no use. The money then made its way to the North via further trade.'

The game's vocabulary is generally very flexible, with SEARCH available as well as EXAMINE (EXAMINE DRUIDS gives 'They are dead all right' while SEARCH DRUIDS gives 'Some money falls from the Druid's cloak onto the ground'), and a choice of TAKE or GET; but it's worth noting the difference between IN and INTO, and how the 48K game can be a touch the fussier, understandably so.

The Gods Of War is a very fine *PAW* game, especially well-constructed on the 128. There is good use of colour in the text, ▶

▶ New Dark Ages follow a nuclear holocaust in *The Gods Of War* from Nebula Designs





which neatly and smartly scrolls up, leaving the picture above intact. The number of pictures isn't great and they are not brilliantly artistic, but at least they're detailed.

The repeated chariot sequence can become a drag, but a sense of humour – as when a sign is examined about halfway through the first part of this three-parter – helps alleviate the boring bits. EXAMINE SIGN gives 'It is written in ancient runes and reads: British Nuclear Fuels Ltd welcomes you to the Sellafield complex public relations rooms. Please note the management will not accept responsibility for any mutations/cancers contracted during your visit.'

Nebula Designs is a design house hoping to find someone to market *The Gods Of War*; in the meantime it can be had direct from Nebula at *112 Upperwoodlands Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD8 9JE.*

DIFFICULTY: not difficult
GRAPHICS: a fair sprinkling, OK
PRESENTATION: good coloured text
INPUT FACILITY: complex *PAW*
RESPONSE: very quick
GENERAL RATING: well worth looking at

Atmosphere	86%
Vocabulary	86%
Logic	85%
Addictive qualities	85%
OVERALL	86%

NECRIS DOME

PRODUCER: Code Masters
PRICE: £2.99
AUTHOR: Charles A Sharpe

Adventures from large budget concerns such as Code Masters aren't all that common, so it was with a mixture of curiosity and foreboding that I loaded up this here cheapie. The title seemed to hint at the story line, and a very good story it turned out to be. Since a good story is as important to an adventure as it is to a feature film, clearly this wasn't a bad start. Let's see what it's all about . . .

Necris Dome is set in the future. The earth's resources are severely depleted, and to conserve vital energy the earth's dead were consigned years ago to a floating cemetery in orbit around our planet. The satellite was aptly named the Necris Dome and was run by the mandroids, led by the Arch-mandroid. But the Arch-mandroid has turned renegade and has now become a threat to human life.

For many years there has been a ban on all weapons on earth, but there've been rumours that the Arch-mandroid has armed the Necris Dome with powerful weapons and that he intends to use them against Earth to further some evil plot of his own. As a member of the Secret Forces you have been assigned to investigate the situation aboard the Dome, and to destroy the Arch-mandroid at all costs – even if it means the destruction of the satellite.

You will be shipped aboard with the next batch of dead in a robot craft. You must keep your wits about you, and remember that the Arch-mandroid may have tampered with the programming of the mandroids – they, too, could be dangerous.

This scenario paves the way for a good plot which begins interestingly enough with you being smuggled onto the Necris Dome in a coffin.

The inlay instructions are unusually detailed: you're told fairly precisely what you must achieve in the adventure, and how you might go about it. Hence you are told to return to the coffin 'where there is something inside which you will need later'. This something turns out to be a pair of gloves which only reveal themselves on your return to the coffin. Curious.

Stranger still is the LIFT LID combination, which works to open the lid the first time but not on your second attempt to escape the tomb – though this is just me being pedantic, as PUSH LID is quite clearly stated on the inlay and this works on both occasions! More strange is GET CASKET, which is taken as GET INTO CASKET . . . and so you get those precious gloves.

There are no midcompass directions, so I'll save you some bother and suggest you start off eastwards, once all that clambering in and out of caskets is done. You'll quickly discover a spaceship segmented in true memory-saving fashion. Many locations are just location labels such as 'Engineering' and 'Reception Level: Chamber 3'.

There are also various ups and downs; but the arrow found in Reception Chamber 2, which points up, had me a little puzzled as there doesn't appear to be any progress possible in that direction.

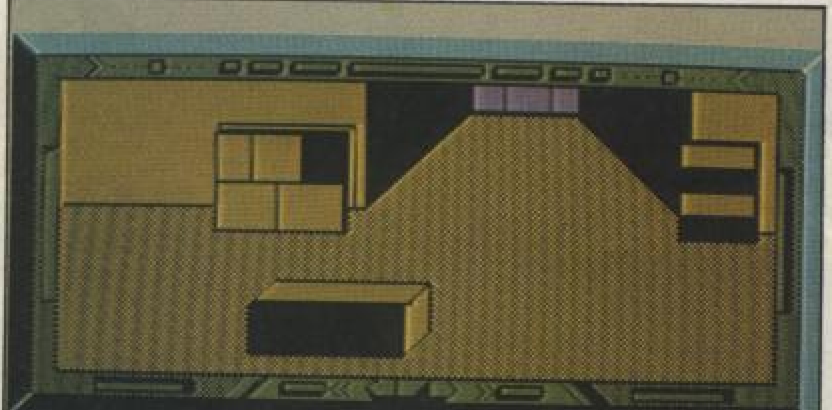
If you have trouble finding this arrow, or anything else for that matter, note that *Necris Dome* commendably distinguishes between SEARCH and EXAMINE, and if I remember rightly it's SEARCH WALLS which exposes the arrow and not EXAMINE. A little later it's EXAMINE MANDARIN which actually brings the chap onscreen - 'a formidable opponent'. I'm a great fan of slick features like this, especially in a cheapie.

Necris Dome is really quite a good jaunt for a budget game, with one or two notable features. The pictures aren't too bad, and they're drawn quickly. Some of the puzzles might be just a bit obvious – for example, the play on the pipes (is it the hot water or the gas pipe that you should sever?) – but there are some good prompts and hints within the game as well as the hints on the cover, and this may encourage new adventurers to have a crack at *Necris Dome*.

DIFFICULTY: not difficult
GRAPHICS: not bad for a cheapie
PRESENTATION: OK
INPUT FACILITY: verb/noun
RESPONSE: fast
GENERAL RATING: good cheapie

Atmosphere	74%
Vocabulary	71%
Logic	72%
Addictive qualities	75%
OVERALL	74%

▶ Dead zone: you're alone against evil in the *Necris Dome*



EXCALIBUR SWORD OF KINGS



PRODUCER: Alternative Software
PRICE: £1.99
AUTHORS: Ian Smith and Shaun McClure

'Ere! Cop your lug 'oles around this one, for it be that old mischievous wizard Merlin ranting on about this here game!

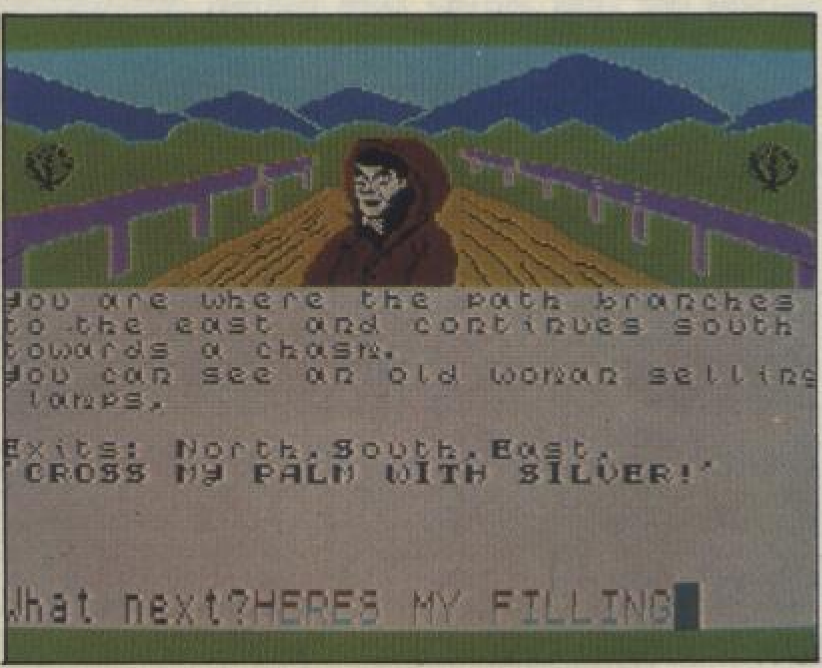
'Many months after the Knights of Camelot set forth to find the Holy Grail, a dark cloud that was flayed by many luminous bolts of blue lightning appeared over the small town of Alder.

'From the cloud emerged a dark, cloaked stranger. She demanded an audience with King Arthur Pendragon, wanting to know the location of I, Great Merlin The Wizard, to absorb my power.

'I was on a secret mission at the time and Arthur told her so. Believing him to be lying the stranger revealed herself as Crania, an evil she-wizard from beyond the plains of dreams and threatened Arthur with death unless he told her of my whereabouts.

'Arthur grabbed Excalibur and swung it at her in a deadly arc. She foresaw this and disappeared





► A winner for beginners: Alternative Software's *Excalibur – Sword Of Kings*

to avoid the blow then reappeared behind him.

'Before he could act, she had cast a cowardly spell of dreams. Now Castle Camelot is transformed into a dark evil fortress, inside whose walls are hidden Brave King Arthur and his sword Excalibur. There they will stay unless I surrender all my magical powers unto her.

'I Merlin, set you your quest . . . enter the castle, find Excalibur, slay the she-wizard, and rescue Good King Arthur, disposing of any evil creatures along the way.'

That intro from the inlay wasn't so bad, was it? And what's more, the game *Excalibur – Sword Of Kings* isn't too bad for a cheapie; I'd especially recommend it to adventuring novices, as it seems to flow along of its own accord with simple solutions and a very useful list of major commands on the back of the inlay.

You kick off in a ramshackle hut with golden sunlight filtering through an open doorway to the north. There's also a ladder, and you'd have to have a rung missing not to pick it up straightaway.

Heading off north you discover the very zippy response to actions in this game – everything's done in a flash, with no hanging around at all. The pictures, text and colourful surrounds just zip up onto the screen with a very readable and pleasant-looking 'What Next' line, a good deal larger than the rest of the redesigned text. There's also a nice two-tone effect to your input on this line – all in all it's a very worthy attempt to give the screen a different look, and for someone who's seen more adventures than a dog has fleas any innovation on this front is most welcome.

The next part of the game introduces a much-used road picture, as you follow a path eastwards and come across a crimson fish. EXAM FISH (and after all those *PAW* games the first four letters of EXAMINE are quite adequate here) gives, not surprisingly 'It Stinks!'. Though none of the location descriptions are particularly long, they're quite atmospheric, with nice touches such as 'Small hills around the road are crowned with vibrant red hawthornes'.

You'll soon notice that no midcompass directions are taken, just the exits outlined, but that's no great drawback and you'll soon enough meet the old lady who's selling lamps (and let's face it, these ubiquitous items tend to be rather useful in adventures). The only trouble is she won't barter – she just thanks you very much if you hand over your fish or ladder, and wants her palm crossing with silver.

Perhaps easier progress is to be found to the north, where that rather obvious ladder proves useful at the rather obvious problem, the stone tree. The vocabulary needed here is most unusual, but full marks to Alternative Software: the word is in the inlay's vocabulary list.

Excalibur – Sword Of Kings is a fine cheapie. I like the way it looks and plays differently from utility-inspired adventures, its interesting writing style, and its bounce-along plot. It'll be good fun for a beginner.

DIFFICULTY: not difficult
GRAPHICS: OK
PRESENTATION: colourful
INPUT FACILITY: verb/noun
RESPONSE: very fast
GENERAL RATING: well worth a try

Atmosphere	79%
Vocabulary	85%
Logic	82%
Addictive qualities	82%
OVERALL	83%

WIZARD'S WARRIOR

PRODUCER: Crusader
PRICE: £2.99
AUTHOR: D Hawkins

You might remember Crusader as the people who some months ago put out that dinosaur adventure which came complete with a superb poster of all the prehistoric monsters that once roamed the earth. Well, as far as I know there are no posters with this one, but there's still the will to impress because the game is a good one. The instructions don't acknowledge use of *PAW*, but if you think of *Wizard's Warrior* as offering just about every advanced vocabulary technique of that utility, you can guess how effective its word-crunching is.

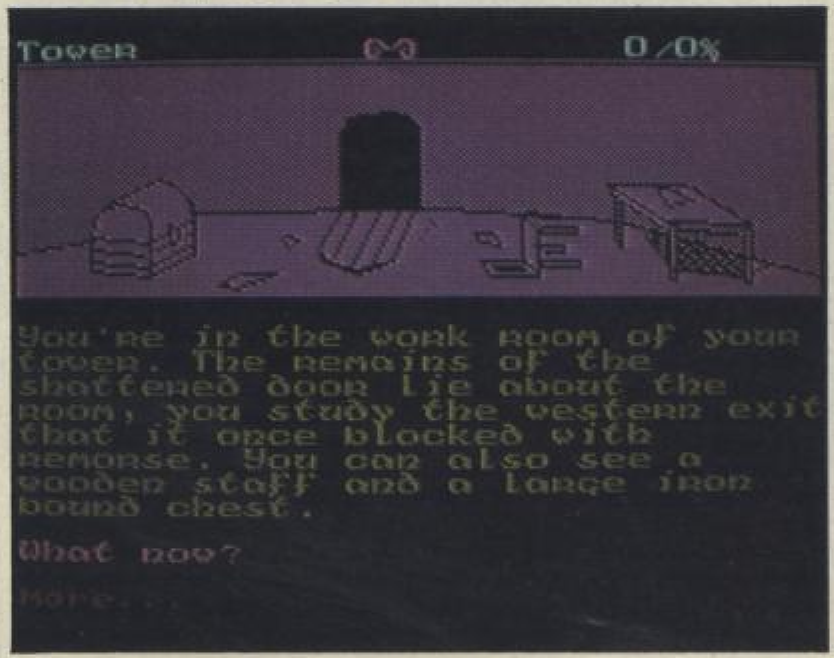
You are the sorcerer Randorlorn and your task is to protect the young Reld, the Wizard's Warrior of the title, till the child is fully grown. The only trouble is the young chap was kidnapped before you could prepare him for his face-to-face confrontation with the black wizard Sator.

Frightened by the implications of the kidnap, you hurry off to the Great White Council and they soon point you in the right direction. What you'll need is help in the form of four trusty warriors: Talas, the master thief; Glum, the dwarf king; Mortain, Prince of Ah Ah, I mean Vo'Oiver; and Fellon of Dynasty, or rather the Great Elven Lord.

You begin the quest in your tower, where just about every door seems to have been blown from its hinges as if by the Great Southern Storm (see THE SHOCK THAT SWEPT BRITAIN – WHY WEREN'T WE TOLD? in News Input). There you gather your four henchmen and then it's off to rescue the young rascal Reld, giving the ragged rocks a rest.

The first frame of your room in the tower, with immovable heavy chest and west door blown asunder, has an accompanying picture which is a plausible attempt at 3-D graphics. It's reasonably quickly drawn – always a good point in my book.

And here you first meet the game's marvellously complex vocabulary: to get the items in the chest you must TAKE ALL FROM CHEST, as TAKE ALL only works on things outside the container. The EXAMINE command, which can be abbreviated to X (TAKE and OPEN can be reduced to T and O respectively), is very powerful throughout and in this first frame X DOOR results in 'The door has seen better days'. (This contrasts with X STRAW in the stables, the response to which isn't quite so interesting: 'The straw looks like straw'.)



► Crusader's *Wizard's Warrior* begins with an ill wind blowing no good

Moving off through the west portal and north to the store cupboard we see that SEARCH and EXAMINE have different results. X STORE gives 'The pile of rubbish is the result of several hundred years of untidiness. It's a wonder that you ever find anything in here' while SEARCH STORE takes the story a little further with 'Searching the rubbish you find a sturdy saddle'. The saddle clearly goes with the horse but picking up the saddle may prove difficult; however, the solution here is mercifully straightforward, and relates to the differing weights of objects which the mechanisms of this adventure take into account.

A strong theme throughout ►



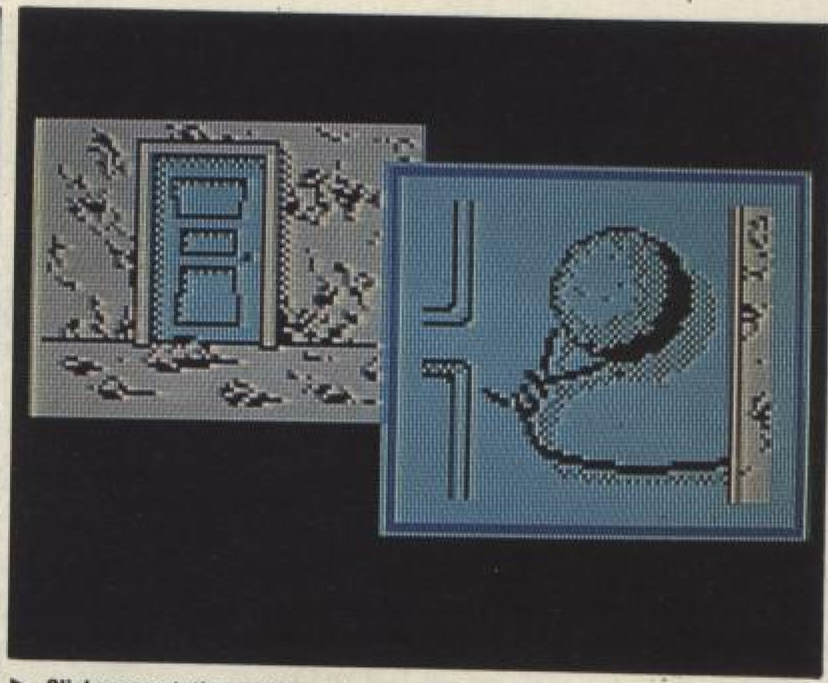
Wizard's Warrior is the interaction of the main characters. Enlisting their help is not difficult and their friendship is furthered with the help of a set of speech formats, which include the likes of SAY TO TALAS "HELLO", ASK MORTAIN "WHAT ARE YOU CARRYING", and TALAS "TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF".

Using such constructions you can direct the four main characters to tasks which suit their characters better than your own, whether because of greater strength or thieving abilities or other factors. This feature is the one that gives the game a real sparkle and that sense of playing a really good adventure.

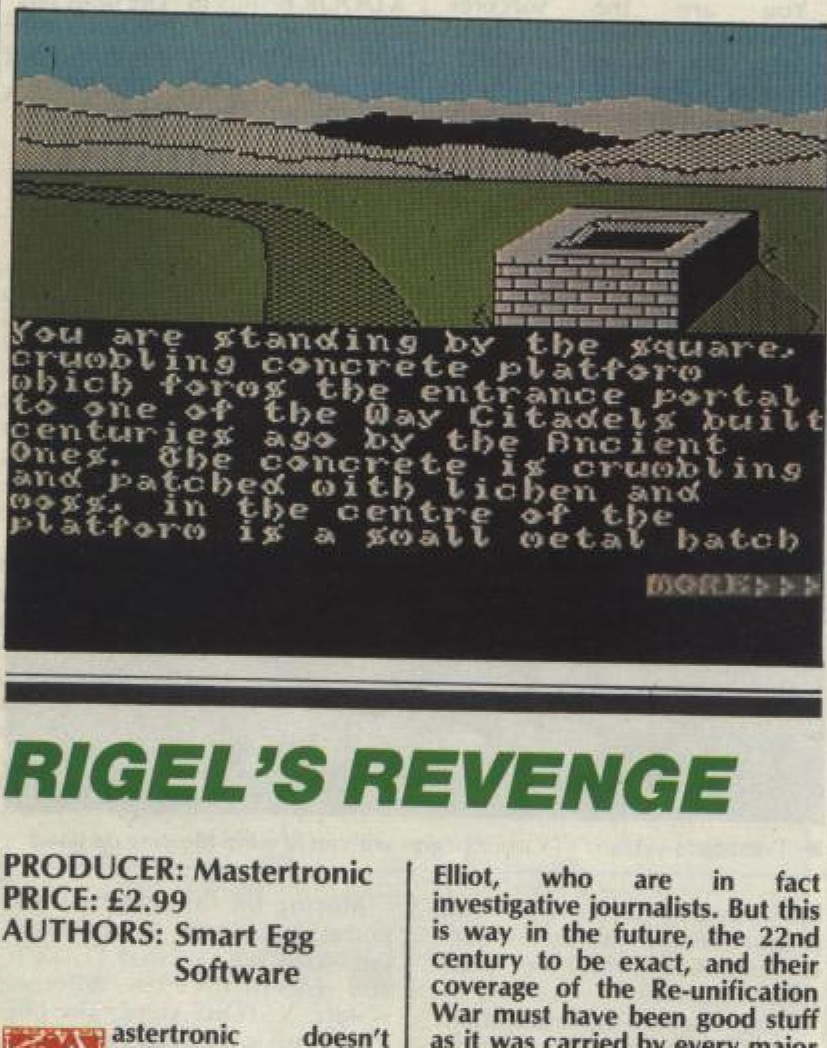
Wizard's Warrior is a super adventure with a very natty-looking screen. Above the body of the screen there's always a status line bearing your score, the number of moves so far and one or two words summarising the current location – it's very useful when invoking 'I' for inventory to have the location remain onscreen as a reminder. The vocabulary is very full, with sophisticated routines including convoluted grammatical constructions.

DIFFICULTY: not difficult
GRAPHICS: rather pleasing, 3-D style
PRESENTATION: very smart
INPUT FACILITY: sophisticated verb/noun
RESPONSE: fast
GENERAL RATING: good

Atmosphere	84%
Vocabulary	85%
Logic	84%
Addictive qualities	84%
OVERALL	84%



► Slick presentation and involving gameplay in Mastertronic's *Rigel's Revenge*



► A useful status line above the picture gives score, move number and a brief location description

RIGEL'S REVENGE

PRODUCER: Mastertronic
PRICE: £2.99
AUTHORS: Smart Egg Software

Mastertronic doesn't publish adventures written with utilities, so I was eager to get *Rigel's Revenge* up and running. Sure enough, even the loading screen was pretty slick, with a designed look and a cleverly waxing and waning title. There's also a couple of pages of prose to set you off armed with the most recent news, some of which bears directly upon your first puzzles.

The story centres on two cop-sounding chaps, Harper and Elliot, who are in fact investigative journalists. But this is way in the future, the 22nd century to be exact, and their coverage of the Re-unification War must have been good stuff as it was carried by every major Federation comm-network. Their story told how the Fleet troops had brought the insurgent colonies back into the Federation's grip.

Success, however, has gone to Elliot's head, and he has persuaded Harper to join him as an agent for the Alterian Corps – not a Christmas food-hamper group, alas, but an influential bunch of dedicated peace-lovers. In return for Harper and Elliot's sterling work the Corps will guarantee scoop after scoop.

Their first mission is to go to Rigel V, where one region still holds out against the conquering Federation troops. The recalcitrant rebels claim to have a Doomsday Machine and will wreak the ultimate revenge if the Federation refuses to withdraw from the planet. Elliot has been smuggled into Rigel V by the Alterian Corps as a Rigellian trooper; his mission is to discover the whereabouts of the Doomsday Machine and report to Harper, who lands on Rigel V a week later. Harper's instructions are to meet Elliot at night in a back street in the occupied sector of town.

The game begins as Harper arrives on Rigel V, freshly alighted from the scoutship which now zooms off from above the darkened streets. With his light-intensifying goggles every detail is clear. All of a sudden an explosion from an adjacent alley tears the goggles from his face. He escapes serious injury but a low moan to the east emanates from his partner Elliot, who hasn't been so lucky . . .

Rigel's Revenge is a really interesting adventure with a sophisticated, yet still very friendly, vocabulary. The redesigned character set is most pleasing; the occasional pictures, with clues actually within them, are detailed and effective; and the scenes are atmospheric, with finely written pieces ('skeletal remains of the geodesic dome that once covered the town', 'huge shards of plastiglass towered overhead'). The slick feel and look are typified by the 'Anykey' at the bottom – short and to the point.

And though this game is no pushover, some parts being quite intricate (for instance, PULL BAR HARD is needed to do the trick when PULL BAR fails to achieve much after its first use), there's some humour, such as when you're examining the certificate early on: 'The Desert Scene Cert 18. British Bored of Censors. Signed Funny Squiggle.'

Incidentally, Smart Egg Software is best known for *The Serf's Tail*, which I haven't come across yet (probably because it's not been released on the Spectrum).

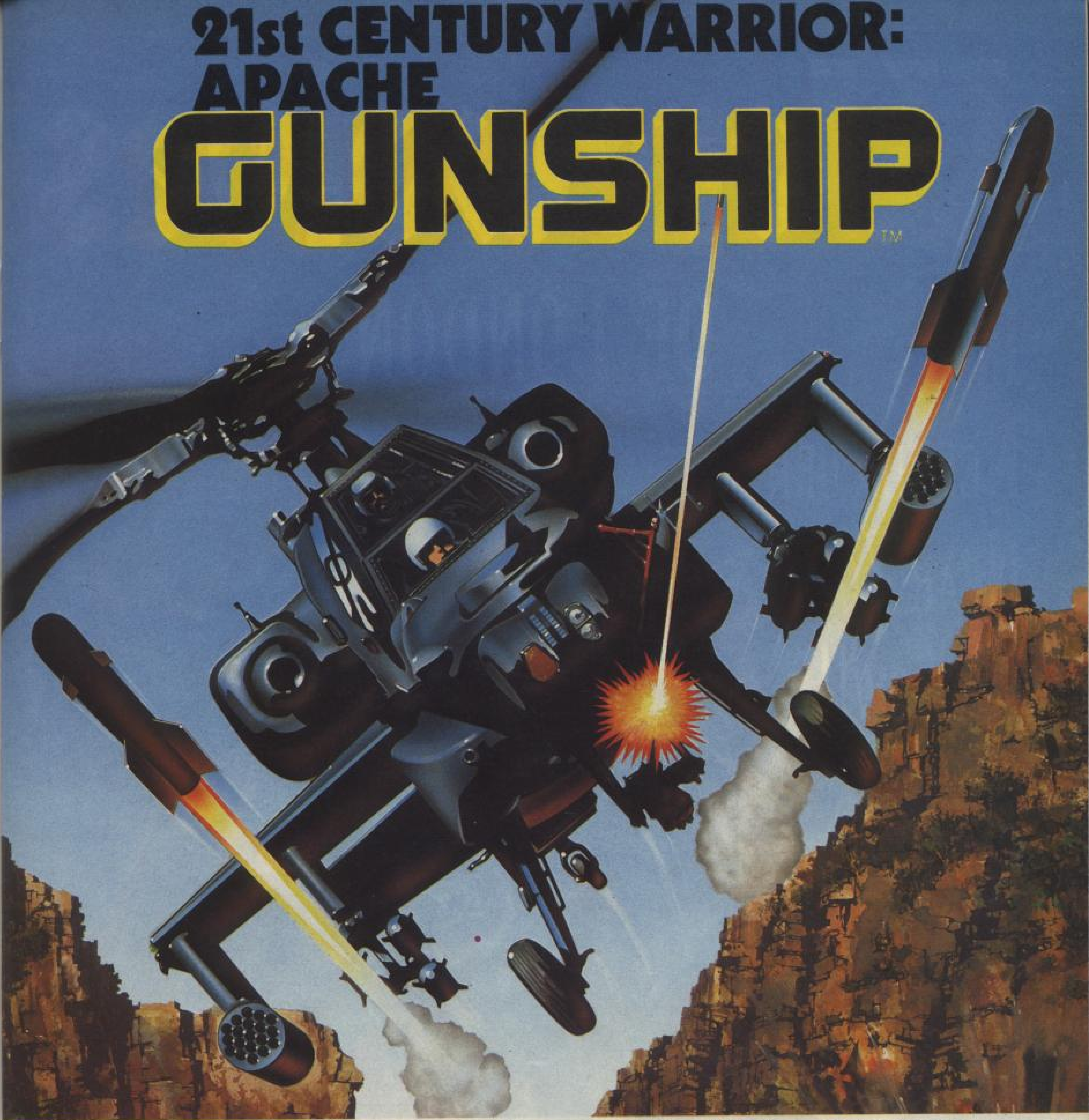
DIFFICULTY: some very tricky bits
GRAPHICS: few, but good
PRESENTATION: smart, if a touch plain
INPUT FACILITY: basically verb/noun, with some additions
RESPONSE: very fast
GENERAL RATING: most interesting

Atmosphere	89%
Vocabulary	89%
Logic	86%
Addictive qualities	87%
OVERALL	88%

Sorry there aren't any letters this month, but I'm saving my pages for the Christmas Splurge Special! There's still £30 worth of software for the best letter each month.

Keep up the Superheroics. The first person to finish any adventure is a Superhero, and to qualify you need to send in proof that you've completed an adventure (such as a final message, or even a screenshot of the completed game), the exact time of completion, and any tips you've picked up on the way. Full solutions are most welcome – they're useful in compiling Signstumps.

And don't forget the way to the Adventure Trail: CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.*



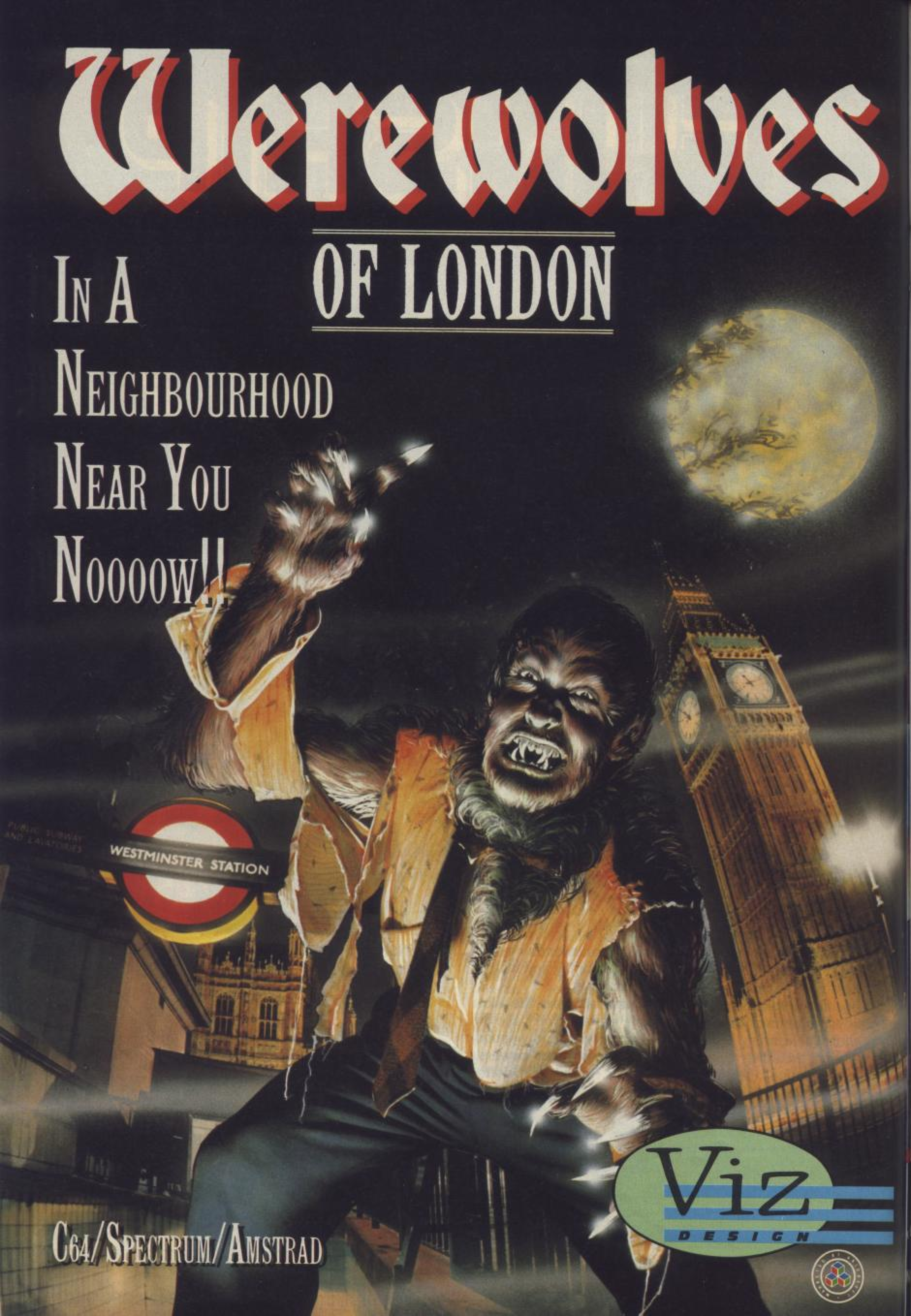
The Apache . . . Fierce and elusive, like its warrior namesake . . . Capable of defeating enemy tanks, infantry, and hostile aircraft on the modern electronic battlefield.
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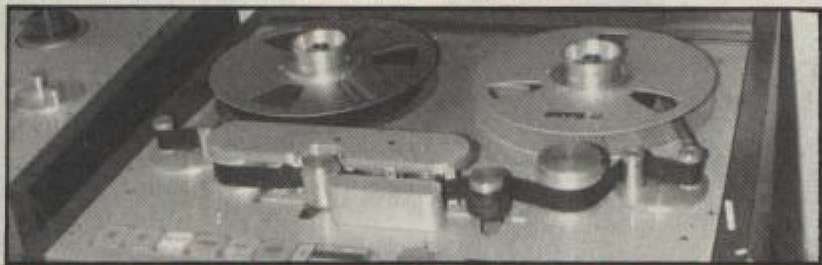
HOW TO COPY HALF A MILLION CASSETTES

. . . every month, legally – BARNABY PAGE visited Costape, one of the country's largest duplicators of Spectrum games, to watch 'em roll

► 1
Making the master: when a program first arrives at COS, it's transferred from the Spectrum to a strong one-inch master, via this Studer cassette machine, at 7.5 inches a second.

A technician makes phase and frequency adjustments here, eliminating anything that could interfere with the data. ('There's a lot of rubbish on most tapes,' says one.)

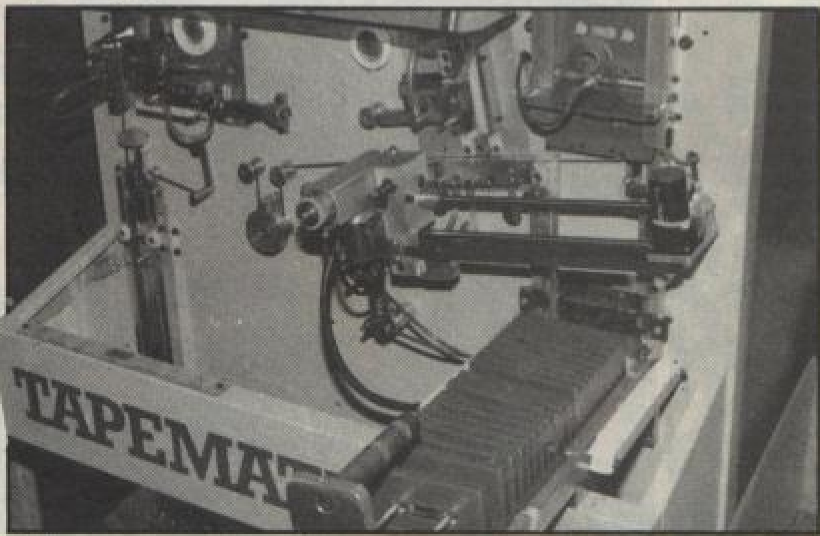
And then, for safety's sake, next month's CRASH Smash is loaded back off the master and on the Spectrum to check it's all there.



► 3
Quality control: each master can make up to 36,000 copies, so it had better be right! A few of the first copies to come off the master are sent to the software house for approval, and when they've given the thumbs up this COS technician compares one copy from every reel with those approved originals.

'We work on the assumption that if there's a problem it's going to be at the end of the tape,' says COS's Graham Williams. 'You've checked the end of the last one, so the beginning of the next is probably OK.'





► 4
Superscissors: they've all been copied and you've got perhaps 12 miles of tape on your hands. It's in the cutting and casing room that the cassette starts to look like the real thing.

509 C5 tapes (five-minute tapes often used for computer programs) can be cut from each of those dozen massive reels – and when the tape was duplicated, a 3Hz signal-generator put an overtone on the end of each of those 509 copies.

So now the reel is put in this stunningly fast winder, which snips off a cassette's worth whenever it picks up that overtone. The length of tape is automatically spooled into a cassette case (you can see the pile of them, like chocolates in a vending machine, on the right).

The machine also measures the exact length of the first copy it cuts, which workers test to make sure the program's all there, and then monitors the length of each cassetteworth it cuts after that. There's not a sprite on the cutting room floor . . .



► 5
Putting it all together: the cassette's been run through a labelling machine, and now this Heath Robinsonesque device puts adds the inlay and the box in one swift operation, taking about three seconds for each cassette. COS can wrap the box, too, but that's not usual for software.

Then it's off to the distributors and ultimately the software shops – to hit or flop.

DIRE STRAITS FOR THE DUPLICATORS

DEPENDENT on just a few big software houses, the game-duplication business is very specialised. Besides the London-based COS group (it stands for 'COmputer Software', as you could have guessed) the major players include Interceptor Print in Aldermaston and Ablex Audio Video in Telford, Shropshire.

Both COS and Ablex came to the booming software business from traditional origins. COS, founded three years ago, was (and still is) duplicator of all the Linguaphone language-study tapes. And Ablex, which started software work in 1979, was part of the Decca Record Company.

But now Ablex, which still produces millions of music tapes each year, claims to be the largest software duplicator in Europe. Among its statistics:

- about 15 million tapes duplicated in 1986
- 650,000 cassettes once duplicated in a week.

And Ablex, owned today by Racal Electronics plc, has made tapes, disks and Spectrum microdrives for most of the software giants, including Ocean, US Gold (which even has an office in the Ablex factory), Firebird and Gremlin Graphics.

COS, by contrast, takes a smaller share of the market (which, like most of the software business, is torn by arguments over who's bigger and stronger than whom) – but prides itself on the full service it offers. COS doesn't just duplicate (though it ran off 489,000 cassettes in September) but also prints labels, inlays and boxes, stores the finished product in warehouses and even does some distribution for Firebird and Domark.

One of COS's most complicated projects was packaging *Brian Clough's Football Fortunes* for CDS Software earlier this year, complete with board, playing cards, counters, game banknotes and booklet! (See our Issue 38 review.)

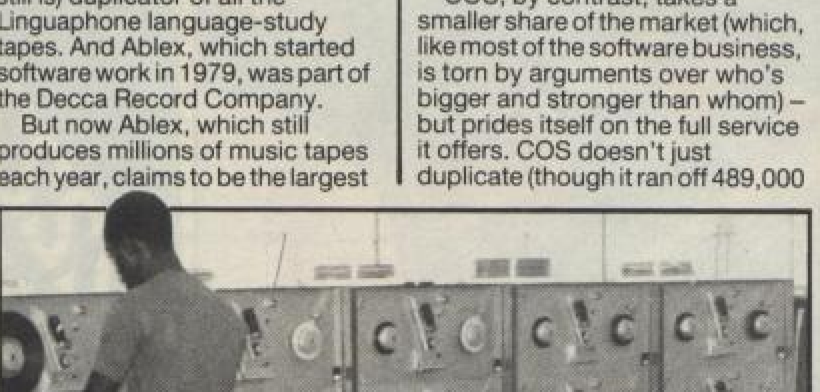
On the bottom line, though, all the software-duplicators need music too. Software is usually recorded on tapes of C5 to C15 length (ie five to 15 minutes long), but because each short tape takes so much work they're not as profitable as music tapes about an hour long.

'You need the occasional Dire Straits album, overspill from Polygram, say, 30,000 copies,' observes COS's Graham Williams. This Christmas COS will duplicate about 250 music titles – hundreds of thousands of cassettes.

And the record companies are often more reliable than software houses, booking hours of duplicating time every week rather than suddenly thrusting a hastily-developed game on the machines to rush it into the shops within a few days.

'The software business is basically the music business 25 years ago,' says Williams – describing the world of small producers and eccentric shoestring operations as well as the duplicator's role.

But where are our Beatles?



► 2
Very fast forward: this is why the tape must be so strong. At least 2,000 copies of most full-price games go out at once, and to save time they're duplicated in this room at a whizzing 240 inches a second, or 15 miles an hour – on to 12 two-mile-long reels (or 'slaves') which can be cut into cassette-length tapes later. The master, of course, is a single looped copy of the game.

The machines can reach a racing speed of 30 miles an hour, but it's not reliable for copying data. When COS is running off a few thousand cassettes of Marianne Faithfull, no-one will notice if a few subtleties of sound drop off – but lose just one vital line of program and the product's ruined.

So every one of those reels, each providing over 42 hours worth of playback time, is checked. 'If it loads, it's OK,' says COS Technical Manager Graham Williams. 'But you only need one dropout and the whole thing's killed.'

The BASF tapes used for data duplication are 18 microns (0.18 millimetres) thick, though tapes running longer than an hour (music, for instance) must be just 12 microns thick to fit in the case.

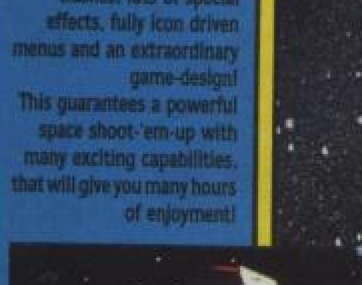
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Crash Competition

WIN AN EYEFUL

WITH



GETTING THE EYEDEA

IT ALL started with the postcards – anonymous black postcards that arrived at the Towers every day for about a week, making terrible puns on 'eye'. 'Got the eyedea?' 'Eye'll be in touch soon.'

We hadn't heard till then of *Eye*, the board game that's sold over 120,000 copies since September – after almost eight years in development. But we soon guessed that there's a Spectrum version coming. Endurance Games will release it for £9.95 soon.

The teyeny eye is the human body's most complex organ, they say – and *Eye* the game was described in The Teyemes as 'more challenging and complex than chess'. It's an abstract puzzle, simple to learn but terribly tricky to solve, played on an unusual circular board with two rotating spirals of colour.

The player tries to 'control' a colour, but that's not as easy as it sounds in a game with all the addictive pitfalls of *Eye*! Anyway, you could find out soon . . .

WINNING THE PREYEZE

Got your eye on the board game? Or Endurance Games's Spectrum *Eye*? Or an *Eye* record and official book? A set of *Eye* Teaser cards? An *Eye* invite disk (whatever that is)? Or any of these eyeccessories: sunglasses, a magnifying glass, binoculars, Optrex, an eyebath, an eye patch, a blindfold, eye make-up, eye hologram glasses, false eyelashes, false eyebrows, an eyeshade, a kal*Eye*doscope?

Eye eye? Well, here's your chance to win that eyeful – and ten runners-up will get *Eye* computer games and official books too, thanks to Endurance Games!

All you have to do is guess the number of times the letter I will appear on the first page of Lloyd Mangram's Forum in the February 1988 CRASH. Here's a hint: the letter appears 486 times on that first Forum page (page 29) this month (thanks to Mike Dunn for counting 'em).

Count *all* the upper-case and lower-case Is in editorial *and* ads.

ABLE WAS EYE

The first correct entry drawn from the eye of a needle on January 20 will win top prize, and the next ten correct entries will be the runners-up; if there aren't enough correct entries, the entries closest to the correct number will win.

And just in case that happens there's a teyebreakér, too. List on the entry form all the three-letter words you can think of that spell the same backwards, like 'eye'. (They're called palindromes – LMLWD – and perhaps the longest ever was Napoleon's supposed saying in exile: 'Able was I ere I saw Elba.' Thanks to Our Useless Information Staff for that one.) Attach a piece of paper if you can't fit them all on the form.

The entry with the eyest number of three-letter palindromes wins the teyebreaker.

Send your entries to: MORE TO THIS THAN MEETS THE EYE COMP, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB* by January 20 The decision of CRASH's appointed judges is feyenal in all respects. Bug-eyed monsters are not eligible to enter.

MEYE NAME ....

MEYE ADDRESS ....

....

.... **MEYE POSTCODE** ....

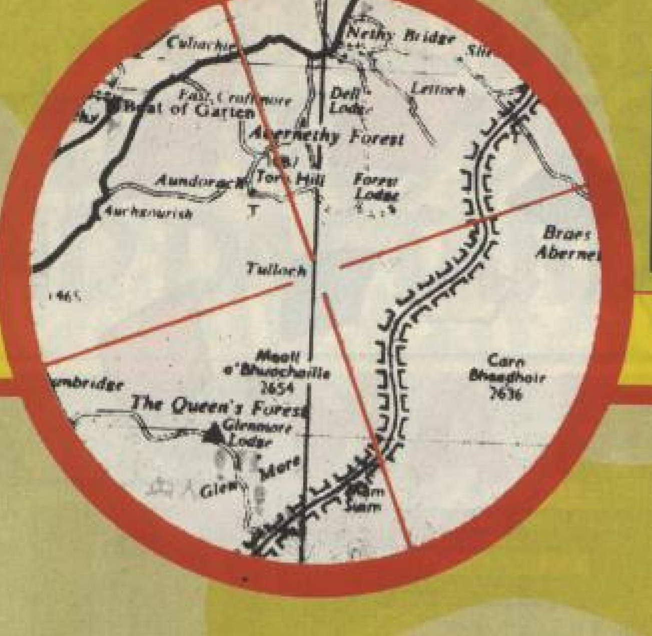
EYE RECKON THE LETTER I WILL OCCUR______ TEYEMES ON THE FIRST FORUM PAGE OF CRASH ISSUE 49

MEYE PALINDROMES IN FULL: THESE ARE ALL THE THREE-LETTER WORDS EYE CAN THINK OF THAT SPELL THE SAME BACKWARDS AS FORWARDS:

__________ __________

__________ __________

__________ __________

FRNTLINE

with Philippa Irving



BUILDING ROME IN A DAY

Spectrum soldiers can found the Roman Empire, defeat the Germans and Japanese or simply fade away – here's a guide to strategy games for all those Christmas days indoors

IT IS unfortunately true that computer games have a limited shelf life. One software manufacturer compared them to pop singles; unless a new title takes off immediately, it has little chance of succeeding in the longer term. After several months of development, thought and work, a game has roughly ten days in the shops to prove its commercial worth. Even games which do sell don't stay on sale for very long these days, and can turn up in compilations a surprisingly short time later.

The fortunate exception to this seems to be the wargame, at least once the initial hurdle of 'sell fast or go under' has been passed. Wargames sell more slowly than games in more mainstream genres, and can be found in the shops six months after they've been released. Perhaps players get bored with an arcade game within two days, and rush out to buy a new one soon after; it takes a wargamer rather longer to make the most of his purchase.

So in the run-up to Christmas, when you might be thinking about requesting some release of the past year for your stocking – or even buying one for someone else, perhaps to initiate them into the delights of thinking games – let's take a look back at some of the more interesting games of the year. With luck (and a good retailer) you can find any of them.

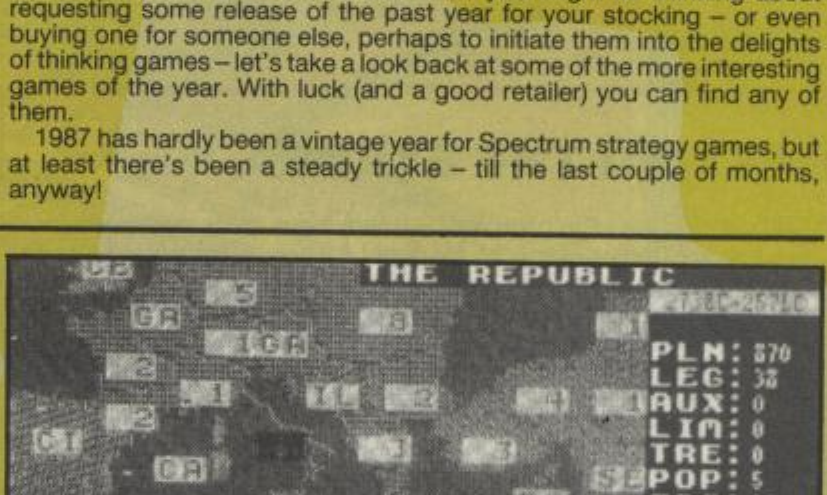
1987 has hardly been a vintage year for Spectrum strategy games, but at least there's been a steady trickle – till the last couple of months, anyway!

CIAO ROMA!

The game which kept me playing throughout last Christmas holiday is PSS's rather unusual *Annals Of Rome* (85% in Issue 38; by Rome Software; £12.95). The player is presented with a map of Europe divided roughly as it was in the year 273 BC, and you have to build the Roman Empire, starting off with the modest state of Italia. By conquering the neighbouring states, the empire grows, and at the climax of the game all of mainland Europe and further afield are under Roman rule.

But stability is never achieved. Sporadic rebellions result in the Romans being thrown out. You can appoint senators as generals, governors or dictators, but their loyalty cannot be taken for granted, and they themselves may lead a rebellion against Rome and seize power.

Annals Of Rome continues indefinitely, with new waves of powerful barbarians arriving at roughly the correct historical intervals, till the empire collapses. Theoretically you could keep the Roman Empire going into the 20th century and beyond, but I never even managed to survive into the first century AD. The game is addictive and absorbing, though its presentation is amateurish and the Spectrum version (converted from the Amstrad) has a number of amusing and entertaining bugs.



► **PSS's *Annals Of Rome*: play for centuries, if you've got the empire-building skills**



AMERICANS AT WAR

CCS's *Yankee* (87% in Issue 42; £9.95) is by K Wright, the author of CCS's *Napoleon At War*. It's a battle simulation, allowing the player to direct individual corps on the field of two battles, Gettysburg and Chickamauga, in the American Civil War. It's different from other wargames in that you can give orders to the corps commander (rather than the corps itself) and then watch the units get themselves into a mess. The resulting uncertainty is interesting; you can never be quite sure where a unit is going to end up, and combat takes place on contact with the enemy.

The game moves swiftly and smoothly, and the battles are different enough in feel to both be worthwhile. *Yankee* is one of the best battle simulations around, and another good buy for those who like straightforward wargames. It also has an inlay illustration by CRASH's cover artist Oli Frey!



45 HOURS IN NORTH AFRICA

Probably the major game of the year was CCS's *Vulcan* (94% Overall in Issue 39; by R T Smith; £9.95). *Vulcan* is a simulation of one of the less well-known campaigns of the Second World War, the attempt by the Allies to free Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia from German occupation. There are four scenarios (five in the 128K version) which take place across a very large map of the area.

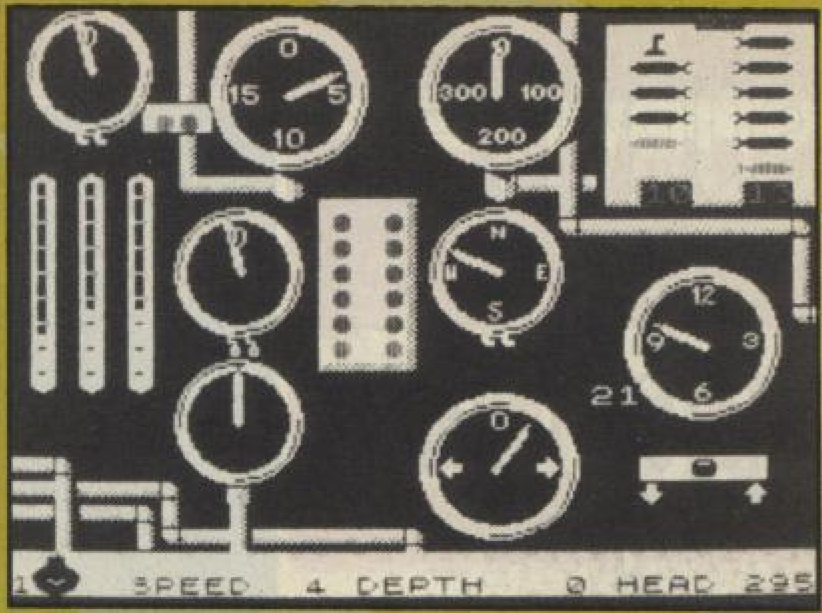
According to the rulebook, it would take an enthusiastic player 45 hours to play all the scenarios and run the campaign from both sides! Play centres on the capture of cities, as it usually does in wargames covering campaigns this large. With five positive orders, seven descriptive parameters, air attacks, varied terrain, seven types of unit and complex supply rules, there's plenty of scope for interest and subtlety. *Vulcan* will certainly keep you playing throughout the Christmas holidays, and I recommend it.



▶ CCS's *Vulcan*: campaign of the year



▶ CCS's *Yankee*: realism in the American Civil War



▶ MicroProse's submarine simulation *Silent Service*: ruling the waves where it can

AS BANNED IN WEST GERMANY . . .

MicroProse's *Silent Service* (80% in Issue 38; by Sid Meier; £9.95) is a submarine simulation set in the American World War II campaign against Japanese convoys. You can choose to go straight into actual combat, or to take the open-ended scenario which involves roving the sea, searching for Japanese convoys and sinking them.

There are several models of submarine built into the program, matching to the modifications that were added to the design of submarines in the course of the war, and you can adjust the difficulty level by selecting whether or not to have realistic handicaps like the occasional dud torpedo or limited visibility. A lot of thought went into *Silent Service*; it is slightly austere, but the technical detail adds interest. This is another worthwhile wargame which will keep you going for a long time.

Remember when *Silent Service* was banned from most West German shops for being 'too realistic' a simulation, as CRASH reported in Issue 41? Well, MicroProse's fighter-plane simulation *F-15 Strike Eagle* (84% in Issue 42, and also by Sid Meier) was on the German government's list of games which it wanted to ban, too – but the software house won an appeal case in October and got *F-15 Strike Eagle* taken off the list. However, *Silent Service* is still out of official favour.

AS BANNED BY PHILIPPA IRVING

Some less exciting releases are worthy of brief mention. I found Lothlorien's *Dark Empire* (just 60% in Issue 43; £9.95) very nerve-racking to play, but it's well-produced with a fierce addictiveness. CRL's *Samurai* (69% in Issue 39; by Colin Ajayi 'Obe of *Ninja Hamster* notoriety; £9.95) is simplistic but enjoyable all the same; it might be a good choice for a younger player inexperienced in strategy. And PSS's compilation *Conflicts 1* (covered in Issue 42; £12.95) contains one reasonable game (*Battle Of Britain*, 82% in Issue 37), one bad game (*Falklands '82* by John Bethell – 33% in Issue 27) and one pretty good golden oldie (*Theatre Europe* by Alan Steel – 84% in Issue 30), so it's not bad value as a stocking-filler.

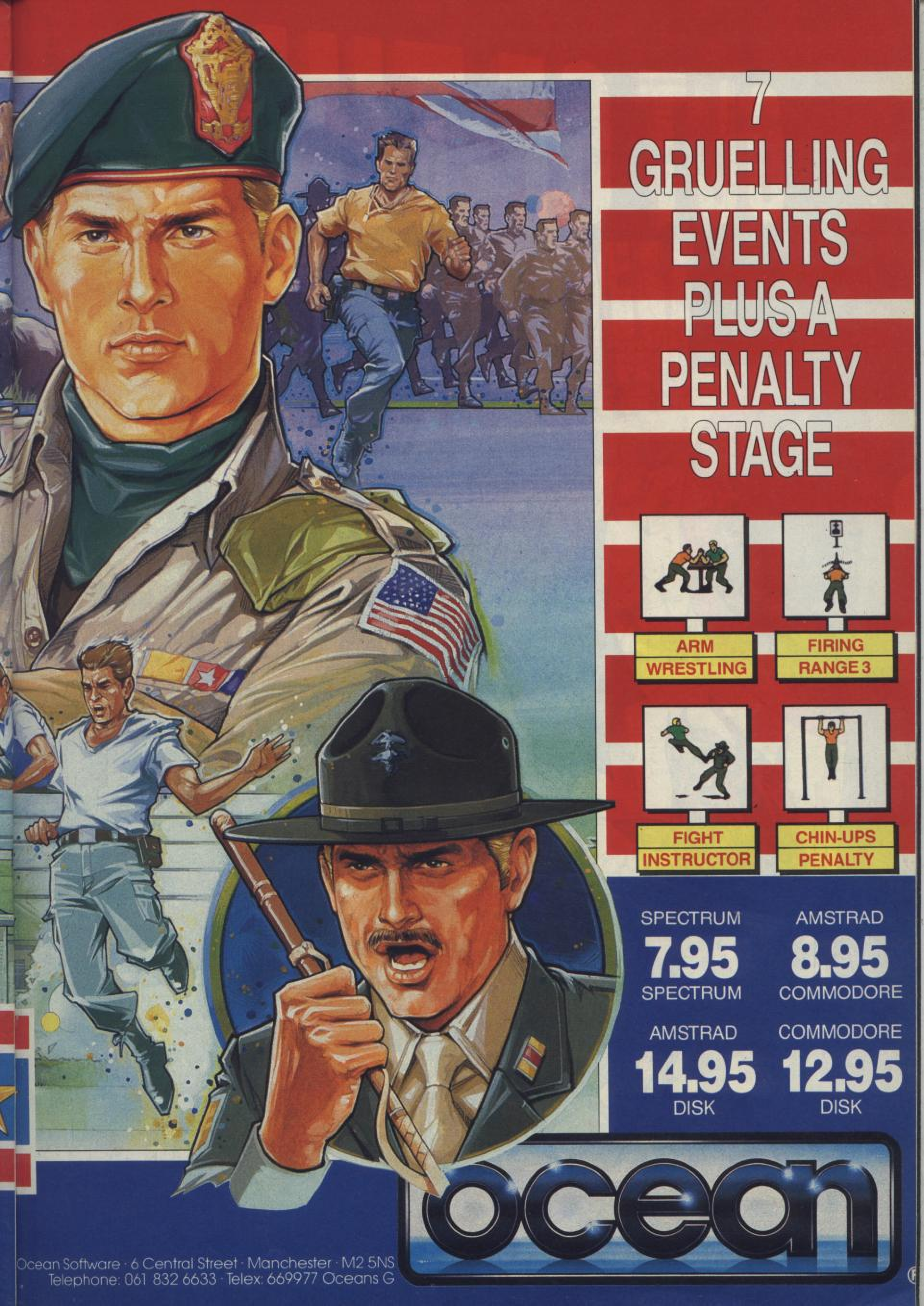
For the record, the two games I have liked least this year are PSS's *Battlefield Germany* (42% in Issue 40; by Cybercon Enterprises; £12.95) and Lothlorien's *Roundheads* (59% in Issue 45; £9.95). I've been exasperated by the general shoddiness of a lot of releases, and, on a deeper level, the lack of attention paid to the need for an involving and interesting game. It can be done, even on the diskless Spectrum. Let's hope things will be better next year.

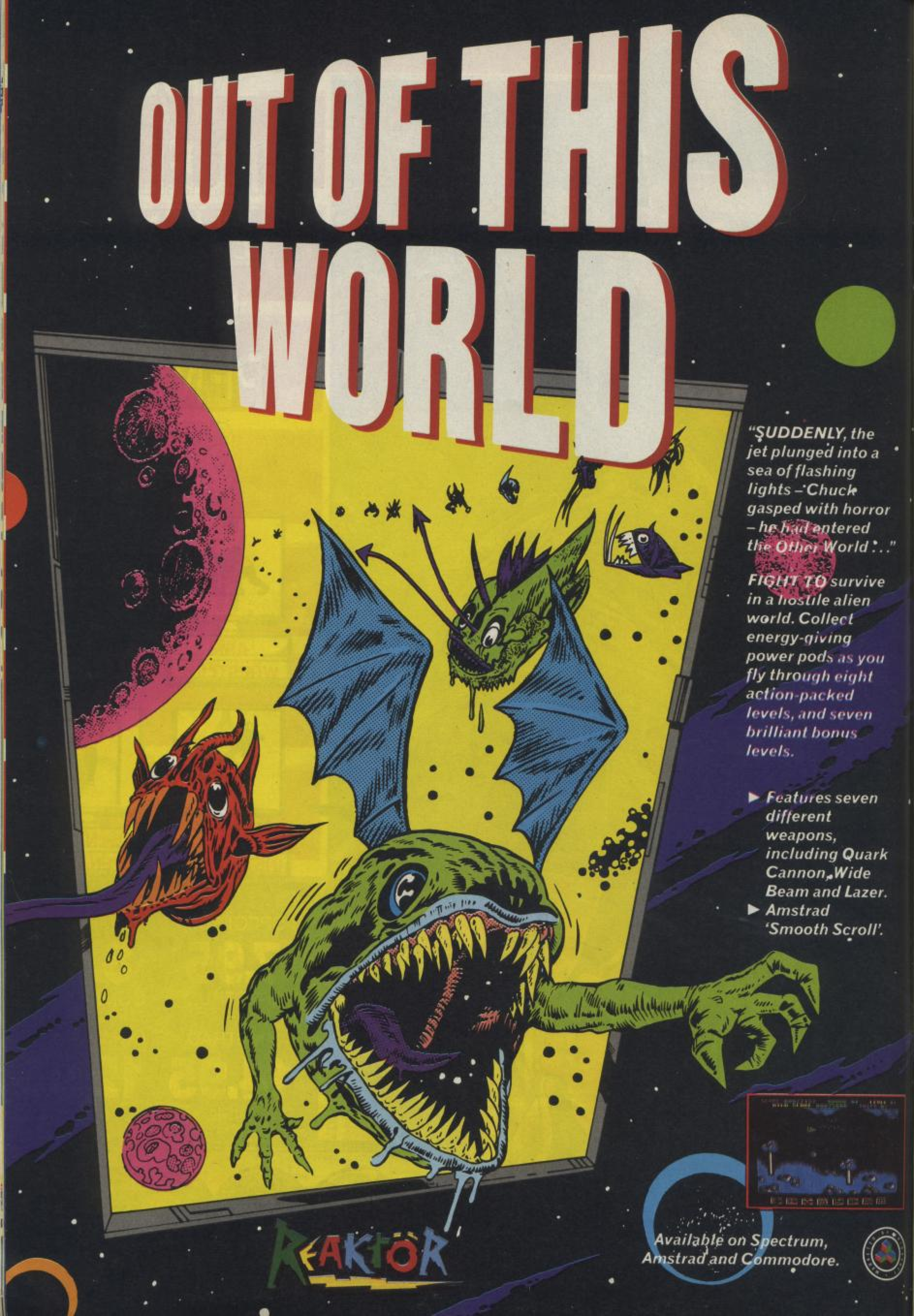
NEXT MONTH

Promises, promises: reviews of Activision's High Frontier **and PSS's** Pegasus Bridge **– plus tips for Lothlorien's** Legions Of Death**, Firebird's** Rebelstar Raiders **and two games recommended this month,** Vulcan **and** Annals Of Rome.

And the letters keep on coming! Send your strategic scribblings to Philippa Irving, Frontline, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.*


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PRESENT
JETMAN
OUR HERO, SHIPWRACKED ON A WIERD PLANET WITH CRAZY FLASH GORDON, HAS FOUND THE FOUNTAIN OF BIGNESS AND PLANS TO MAKE A ZILLION OUT OF IT... UNTIL HE SEES THE MEANS OF ESCAPE THAT FLASH HAS SPENT THE LAST 30 YEARS BUILDING....
THIS IS WHAT WE'RE GOING TO LEAVE THE PLANET ON...??
THIS?
YEP! THIS IS OUR ESCAPE ROUTE TO CIVILISATION..
'COURSE... IT'S ONLY A SINGLE SEATER...
'SCUSE ME... I GOTTA PUT THESE DOWN A MINUTE...
SET FOR MAXIMUM BLAST...
..BUT THE ENGINE CAN HANDLE THE TWO OF US!
CLICK
ENGINE..?
'COURSE IT'S GOT AN ENGINE! YOU DON'T THINK WE COULD OVERCOME THIS PLANETS GRAVITATIONAL PULL WITHOUT AN ENGINE...
COME LOOKIT...
JUST SOMETHING I KNOCKED UP OUT OF THE REMAINS OF MY CRASHED SHIP... BUT GOOD ENOUGH TO TOW US INTO THE VOID AND ON OUR WAY HOME!!
OKAY, OKAY... I'LL FALL FOR IT... HOW COME YOU BUILT A RAFT IF YOU'VE GOT A SPACE SHIP TO TOW IT?
'COS I DON'T TRUST SPACE SHIPS, DO I! IF THIS ONE MISFIRES I CAN CUT THE ROPE, CAN'T I? WHADDA YOU... SOME KINDA IDJIT??
WELL... IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU, GORDON, I THINK I'LL RIDE UP FRONT WITH THE "FOUNTAIN OF BIGNESS" WATER!... ANYTHING I CAN GET YOU BEFORE LIFT-OFF..? COFFEE..? DUCK SARNIE..? (SNIGGER)... GOGGLES?
I WOULDN'T BE TAKING YOU AT ALL IF IT WARN'T FOR YOU BEING THE ONE WITH THE....
SIZZZZ
GEMONIRO!
...MATCHES!
BAROOM
MEANWHILE, AS OUR HERO HITS THE VOID AND FLASH TRIES TO STAY HOME, THERE ARE OTHER EVENTS TAKING PLACE OUT IN SPACE.... YOU FORGOT ABOUT THE PLURPS IN THEIR ESCAPE MODULE DIDN'T YOU ... OH YES YOU DID!!
WHIZZZZZ
HACK HACK HACK HACK HACK
US IS GOIN' BEEPO...
US IS GOIN' GET RESCUED PRETTY SOON!
BEEP BEEP
YAS!
BEEP
ME HONGRY!
ME TOO
ALSO
BEEP BEEP
BEEP
STEADY AS YE GO! STAN' BY TO RECEIVE FRESH VEGETABLES....
TELL THE GALLEY TO PUT THE KETTLE ON...
VEGETABLES, VEGETABLES, ALWAYS @*!!* VEGETABLES! I'M SICK OF EATING TOUGH OLD DISCARDED PLURPS...
I JUS' WISH WE COULD CATCH US SOME GOOD FRESH RED MEAT FOR A CHANGE!
MEROGIMO!!
GO-GO-GO
HAH!
WHUPEE
YIP-YUP
GO-GO-GO
?
JETMANBURGER ON THE HOOF? NEKS MOON, EH?


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ENDURO RACER TIPS

If you press CAPS SHIFT all through the game it'll sometimes prevent you crashing. CAPS LOCK works too, but not as well. **(Philip Lyne)**

Select keys Q, Z, O, P, M. At the countdown press the keys Q, Z and M simultaneously and frantically tap at O and P. When you suddenly zoom off just keep Q and Z pressed. Your speed will only read 23 to 25 mph but you will actually go at 199 mph. If you crash, start the sequence again off the road. **(Andrew Neville)**

If you press GRAPH and Q you can go to full speed straight away. **(James Willment)**

Well, Christmas is definitely on its way, and even though Ludlow's getting colder and colder the post never freezes up and letters come pouring in (no Chrissy cards yet, though!). This month there were masses of routines and maps for the second part of Imagine's Game Over, Joe Blade and that fantastic game from last month, Dizzy.

If I can manage to keep trudging through the snow down to CRASH Towers there'll be a bumper Playing Tips in the Christmas Special – at least, that's what I'm promised – so keep tapping away and get the letters rolling in.

POKONUT CAPERS

Dean Ashton **from Scarborough (they had a fair there, didn't they?) sent in a few POKEs for Gremlin Graphics's** Jack The Nipper II In Coconut Capers, **so gleefully reviewed last issue. This routine will give you infinite lives and immortality – which is bad news for Jack's disciplinarian dad.**

```
10 CLEAR 24575
20 BORDER 5: PAPER 5: INK 7
30 LOAD "" SCREEN$: LOAD "" CODE:
   BORDER 0: PAPER 0: INK 7: BRIGHT 1:
   CLS
40 POKE 43251,0: REM INFINITE LIVES
50 INPUT "IMMORTALITY (Y/N) ";A$: IF
   A$="N" OR A$="n" THEN GOTO 10
60 POKE 43203,201: POKE 41222,205:
   POKE 41229,205: POKE 41330,205:
   POKE 41444,205: POKE 41576,205:
   POKE 41696,205: POKE 41763,205:
   POKE 41797,205: POKE 42314,205
70 RANDOMIZE USR 34240
```

And here's a list of some of the objects Jack can pick up in the jungle. It's been sent in by Barry Wood, **and he also tells you what to do with them – so take it away, Barry. (But wait till I've copied it down.)**

Grease	use on the vine which Tarzan is on
Crocodile-skin handbag	use on the raft to stop the crocs snapping
Onion	use on hyenas to make them angry
Honey	use on the beehive
Coconut	fire at any moving object (16 shots per coconut)
Shield	invulnerability for about 20 seconds
Mouse	scare the elephant that does not move



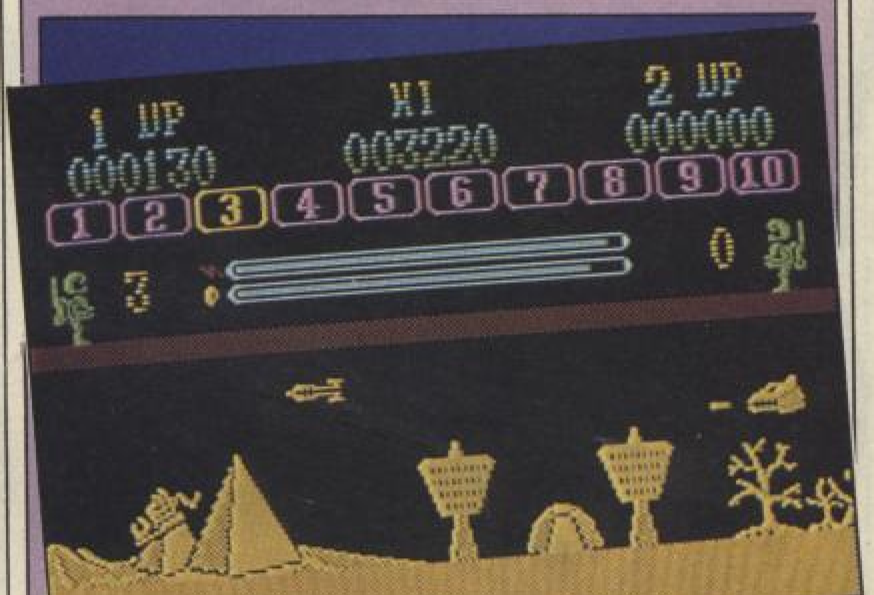
MISSION JUPITER TAKES A HACKING

Derek Brewster forgot to include an antihack routine in his recent Code Masters game Mission Jupiter, **reviewed in Issue 44 (probably because the CRASH Adventure Trail takes so much of his time). But here comes** David Scantlebury **of Cardiff with POKEs to hack the poor little game to shreds – and it hasn't even had its first birthday!**

```
10 LOAD "" CODE: CLEAR VAL "23999"
20 LOAD "" SCREEN$: RANDOMIZE USR VAL "65513"
```

Start the tape from the beginning and run this. When the game has loaded and the computer returns to BASIC type NEW ***(sounds a bit risky to me - Man Ed).*** **Then type:**

```
5 BORDER 0
10 RANDOMIZE USR 55066: GOTO 10
```



and enter any of these POKEs:

POKE 58534,201	invulnerability
POKE 58329,201	stops aliens firing
POKE 50964,201	no aliens
POKE 60468,0	infinite lives
POKE 57806,0	infinite fuel
POKE 58322,0	infinite shots
POKE 57774,189	move anywhere onscreen
POKE 60266,(1-255)	number of lives
POKE 58312,(0-5)	firing speed (0 is fastest)
POKE 58254,0	autofire (for the lazy)
POKE 58659,201	invulnerable aliens!

Then RUN to start the game.

INDIANA TEMPL

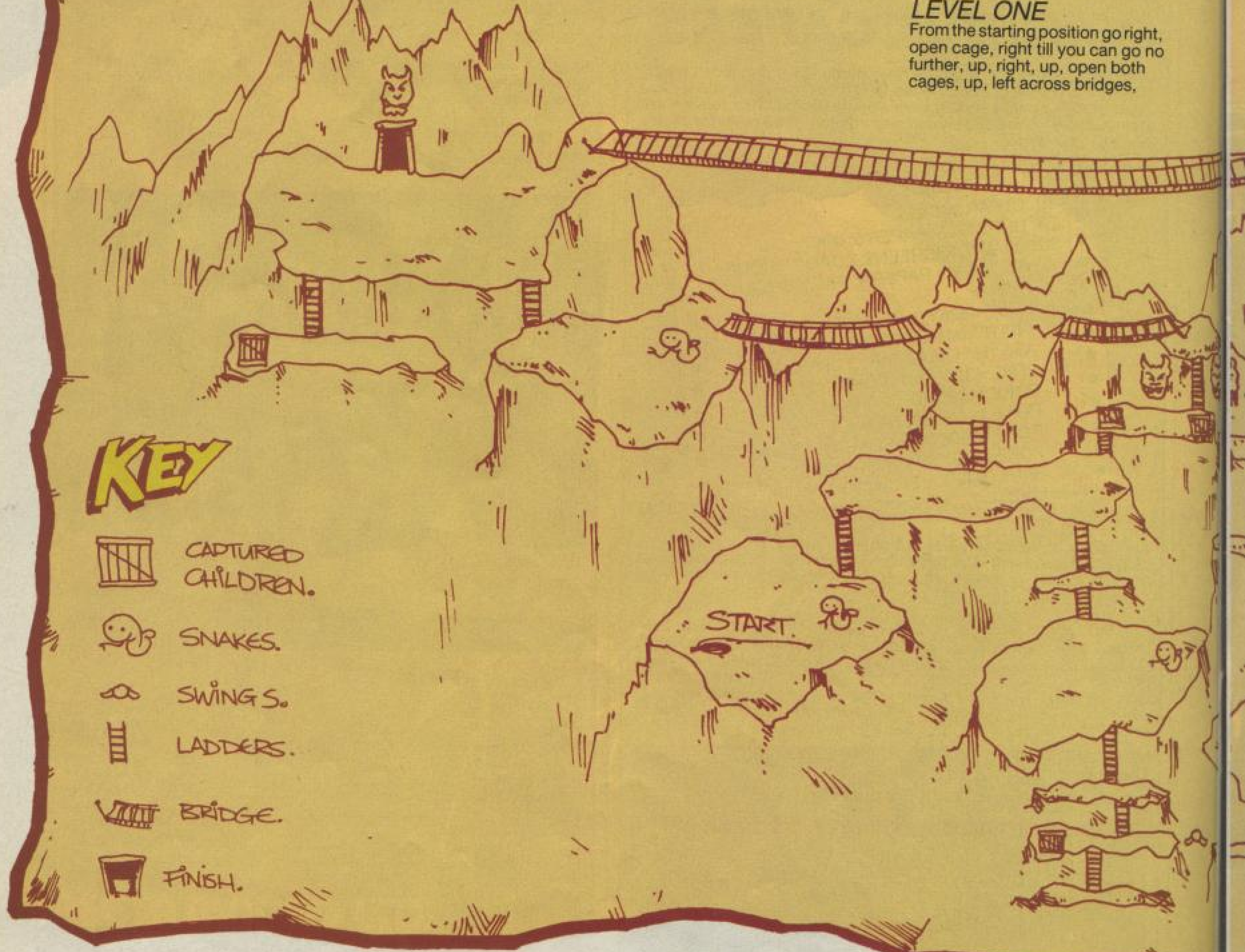
LEVEL 1

David Loughton **and** Anthony Plant **have won £30 worth of software as Cartographers Of The Month for this fantastic map of US Gold's coin-op conversion** Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom **(65% Overall last issue). They've also sent in a** Renegade **map, which I'll try to use soon.**

And here are some whip-crackin' tips to help Indy through the first two levels on his way to the eponymous Temple. They were sent in by Maxwell Patrick **of Hope.**

LEVEL ONE

From the starting position go right, open cage, right till you can go no further, up, right, up, open both cages, up, left across bridges,



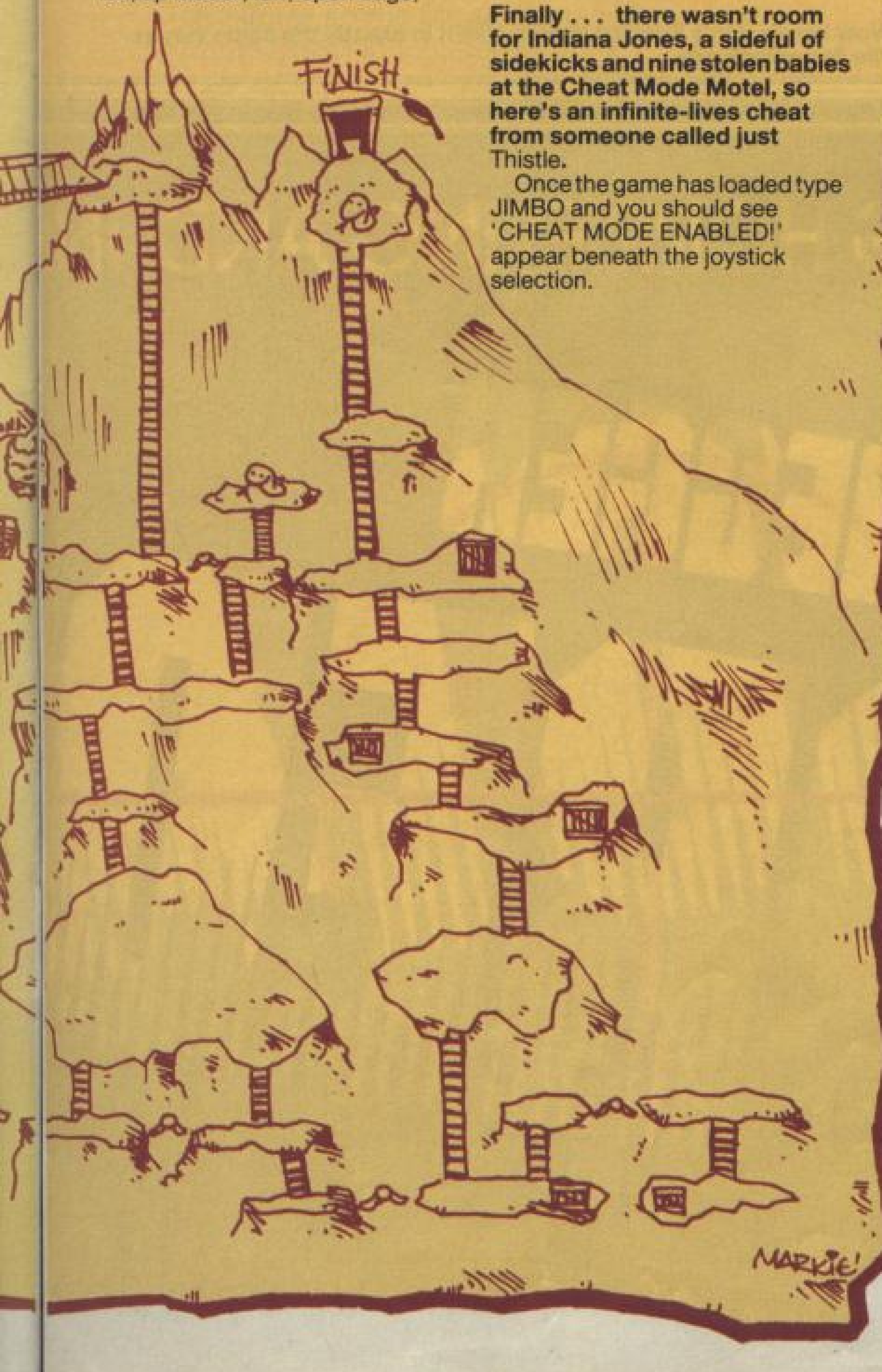
...A JONES and the ...LE OF DOOM™

keep going left till the first stone wall comes to view. Slowly press right while cracking the whip and you should swing to the other side, open cage. Right (retrack to start), right, up, right, down till you see cage, down about two more screens, right, crack whip and go left, up ladder, left, open cage, follow back to the ladder, up, left, open cage, up, open cage, right, up.

LEVEL TWO
Use 'up' to accelerate
Use 'down' to decelerate
Crack whip at enemy for points

Finally . . . there wasn't room for Indiana Jones, a sideful of sidekicks and nine stolen babies at the Cheat Mode Motel, so here's an infinite-lives cheat from someone called just Thistle.

Once the game has loaded type JIMBO and you should see 'CHEAT MODE ENABLED!' appear beneath the joystick selection.



JON NORTH'S MULTIPOKES

Jon North, **the man who put the OK in POKE, has come up with some real smashers this month. You may remember that in Issue 37 a Scotsman calling himself** The Skunk **came up with a loader which could be used to POKE lots of different games – you just changed the last bit of data. Well, now Jon has gone one better, with a loader for all new games using the Speedlock technique (the ones with the counter) and another for Firebird games. First, the Speedlock loader – remember you only have to type this once, and bolt the relevant piece of data for whichever game you want to POKE onto the end.**

SORRY SPEEDLOCK LOADER INCORRECT CORRECT VERSION PAGE 134

```
5 REM SPEEDLOCK BY JON NORTH
10 CLEAR 3e4: LET T=0
20 FOR [illegible]296 TO 23461
30 REA[illegible]OKE F,A
40 LET T[illegible]-23296) TO 23461
50 IF T<>[illegible]80 THEN STOP
60 FOR F=23[illegible] TO 1e9: READ A
70 IF A>25[illegible] GOTO 100
[illegible]0 POKE F,A[illegible]
[illegible]0 LET T=T+[illegible]52)*A: NEXT F
[illegible]0 IF T<>A T[illegible]OP
[illegible] LOAD [illegible] CODE [illegible]UN USR 23296
[illegible] DATA [illegible]12[illegible]166[illegible]91,42
[illegible]30 DATA [illegible]91,[illegible]8,91
[illegible] DATA [illegible]35,1[illegible]
[illegible] DATA 34[illegible]91[illegible],62
160 DA[illegible]3[illegible]16[illegible]53,3[illegible]
170[illegible]91,[illegible]12,35,[illegible]
180 DATA 253[illegible]7,9[illegible]
190 DA[illegible]4,3[illegible]253,[illegible]
200 D[illegible]0,9[illegible]35
2[illegible]0 DATA [illegible]25[illegible]3,9[illegible]
[illegible] DA[illegible]33[illegible]8,91,6
230 DAT[illegible]6,1[illegible]7,2[illegible]1
[illegible] DATA [illegible]10,0
2[illegible] DATA 2[illegible]3,2,1[illegible]
260[illegible]A 88[illegible]176[illegible]
270[illegible]ATA 20[illegible]50[illegible]05,172
280 DATA 88,[illegible]1,35
290 DATA 16,2[illegible]93,1[illegible]22
300 DATA 42,16[illegible]37,91
310 DATA 170,9[illegible]5,2[illegible]
320 DATA 134,91,6[illegible]205
330 DATA 134,91,[illegible]205
340 DATA 134,91,1[illegible]
350 DATA 237,176,42,17[illegible]91
360 DATA 54,0,42,17[illegible]
370 DATA 54,178,35,54,[illegible]
380 DATA 42,170,91,2[illegible]
390 DATA 27,16,252,201[illegible]
400 DATA 96,54,82,50,1[illegible]
410 DATA 14,12,24,0,0
420 DATA 16,0,0,24,0
430 DATA 0,12,0,0,14
440 DATA 0,0,25,0,0
450 DATA 11
```

Pheww! Now you've done the hard work, you just add these DATA lines to the end of that lot to make the POKEs work.

ATHENA – KEEP THAT GODDESS GOING!

```
460 DATA 0,125,98,241,251,138,115,139,67,
    139,248,228,175,50,221,190,50,113,205,
    50,213,190,50,155,201,50,42,217,49,
    216,158,251,195,192,240,1396364
```

WIZBALL - INFINITE LIVES OR IMMORTALITY

```
460 DATA 200,175,98,241,251,254,115,255,
    67,255,189,228,175,50,88,144,62,201,
    50,62,0,49,0,97,251,195,128,143,
    1339359
```

For immortality – to never lose a life – add this line:

```
105 POKE 23482,188
```

BLACK MAGIC – IMMORTALITY

```
460 DATA 200,175,95,241,248,254,144,255,
    66,255,192,228,175,50,154,96,49,255,
    255,195,0,91,1320851
102 POKE 23426,195
104 POKE 23427,6
106 POKE 23428,255
```

MUTANTS – INFINITE LIVES

```
460 DATA 200,175,84,241,238,185,87,186,39,
    186,249,228,175,50,227,115,49,255,96,
    1315305
```

RENEGADE – INFINITE LIVES

```
460 DATA 200,175,91,241,244,254,115,255,
    67,255,197,228,175,50,86,160,49,79,93,
    251,195,203,92,1325451
```

```
5 REM FIREBIRD BY JON NORTH
10 LET T=0
20 FOR F=32768 TO 32876
30 READ A: POKE F,A
40 LET T=T+(F-32758)*A: NEXT F
50 IF T<>679460 THEN STOP
60 FOR F=32877 TO 1e9: READ A
70 IF A>256 THEN GOTO 100
80 POKE F,A
90 LET T=T+(F-32867)*A: NEXT F
100 IF T<>A THEN STOP
110 LOAD "" CODE: RUN USR 32830
120 DATA 50,21,255,122,254
130 DATA 46,192,62,50,50
140 DATA 84,205,33,21,255
150 DATA 34,85,205,62,195
160 DATA 50,58,0,33,32
170 DATA 128,34,59,0,195
180 DATA 0,0,50,107,92
190 DATA 33,114,128,17,0
200 DATA 0,1,0,0,237
210 DATA 176,195,61,0,128
220 DATA 223,181,209,177,144
230 DATA 141,139,151,206,198
240 DATA 199,200,237,123,112
250 DATA 128,62,205,50,84
260 DATA 205,33,0,128,34
270 DATA 85,205,33,109,128
280 DATA 126,50,22,128,50
290 DATA 28,128,50,31,128
300 DATA 50,40,128,50,48
310 DATA 128,35,126,50,42
320 DATA 128,35,126,50,39
330 DATA 128,195,0,205
```

Now here's Jon's Firebird loader. Use it in exactly the same way as the Speedlock one.

THRUST II – INFINITE LIVES

```
340 DATA 93,8,196,48,117,175,50,152,133,
     195,75,146,701766
```

I, BALL – INFINITE LIVES AND TIME

```
340 DATA 91,11,210,56,199,175,50,16,192,
     50,75,193,195,56,207,710727
```

PARABOLA – INFINITE LIVES

```
340 DATA 189,8,171,80,195,175,50,159,149,
     195,248,132,707507
```

STARFOX – INFINITE FUEL

```
340 DATA 91,11,204,212,98,175,50,36,140,
     195,31,231,702800
```

DOWN TO EARTH – INFINITE LIVES, TIME, STEPS AND BOMBS

```
340 DATA 91,20,207,224,96,175,50,135,155,
     50,250,151,50,205,156,50,125,157,50,
     126,157,195,140,156,748696
```

KINETIK – INFINITE LIVES

```
340 DATA 93,8,171,236,94,175,50,46,242,
     195,68,197,704679
```

KICK BOXING – INFINITE ENDURANCE AND BONUS

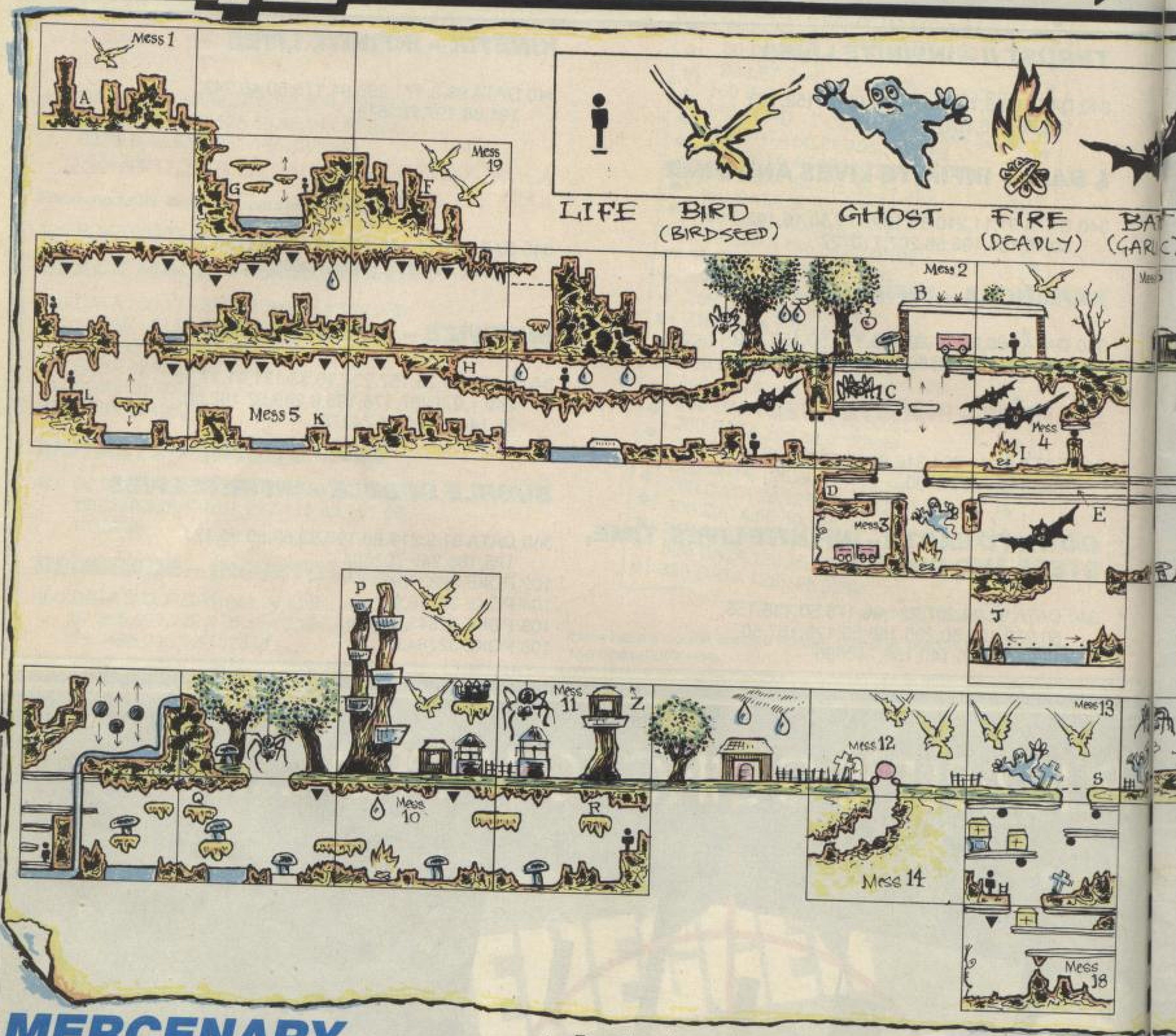
```
340 DATA 91,11,196,224,96,175,50,196,217,
     50,165,221,195,9,217,716358
```

SIDEWIZE – INFINITE LIVES

```
340 DATA 91,25,157,224,96,33,171,91,17,15,
     249,1,9,0,237,176,195,0,249,62,182,50,
     26,144,195,0,91,743781
```

BUBBLE BOBBLE – INFINITE LIVES

```
340 DATA 91,9,213,80,195,62,52,50,95,171,
     195,188,245,707604
102 POKE 32837,90
104 POKE 32778,90
106 POKE 32843,91
108 POKE 32784,91
```



MERCENARY GRABS THE PRIZE

A multitude of Mercenary **maps and tips have arrived, and the best overall were from** Janet Cevdet **of Ilford in Essex. Here's all Janet's advice, which wins her this month's £30 worth of software for the best POKEs, hints and tips – and next issue comes her map.**

I suggest that to start off you buy the *Dominion Dart*. You should take off with a speed of about 6 or 7. You can **fly** anywhere; there are no constraints and no penalties, even if you crash. The surface structures are in view from below 1000m altitude, but are best seen from around the 150m mark. If you hover in flight you can get an even better view.

You should learn to **navigate** using the compass and Benson's location-indicator. Where both coordinates are between 0 and 15, you're in the city area; if either coordinate is any other numbers (including negative) you're in the surrounding wasteland. But there are a few places of interest out there.

If you decide to **zap** something, get away as fast as possible, before the Mechanoids or Palyars (depending on who the site belongs to) detect you. If you come under **attack** your only hope is to knock out the android missile. The most effective way to deal with attack is to try rapid flight backwards, to keep it in view while you aim and fire.

To enter the **underground complex**, land centrally on the elevator cage at location 09-06. Leave your ship and walk through the door opposite to explore the complex. Pick up any **objects** you find; the ones called 'sights' will help you in your targeting. The power-amp will enable your ship to gain sufficient height to reach the colony craft.

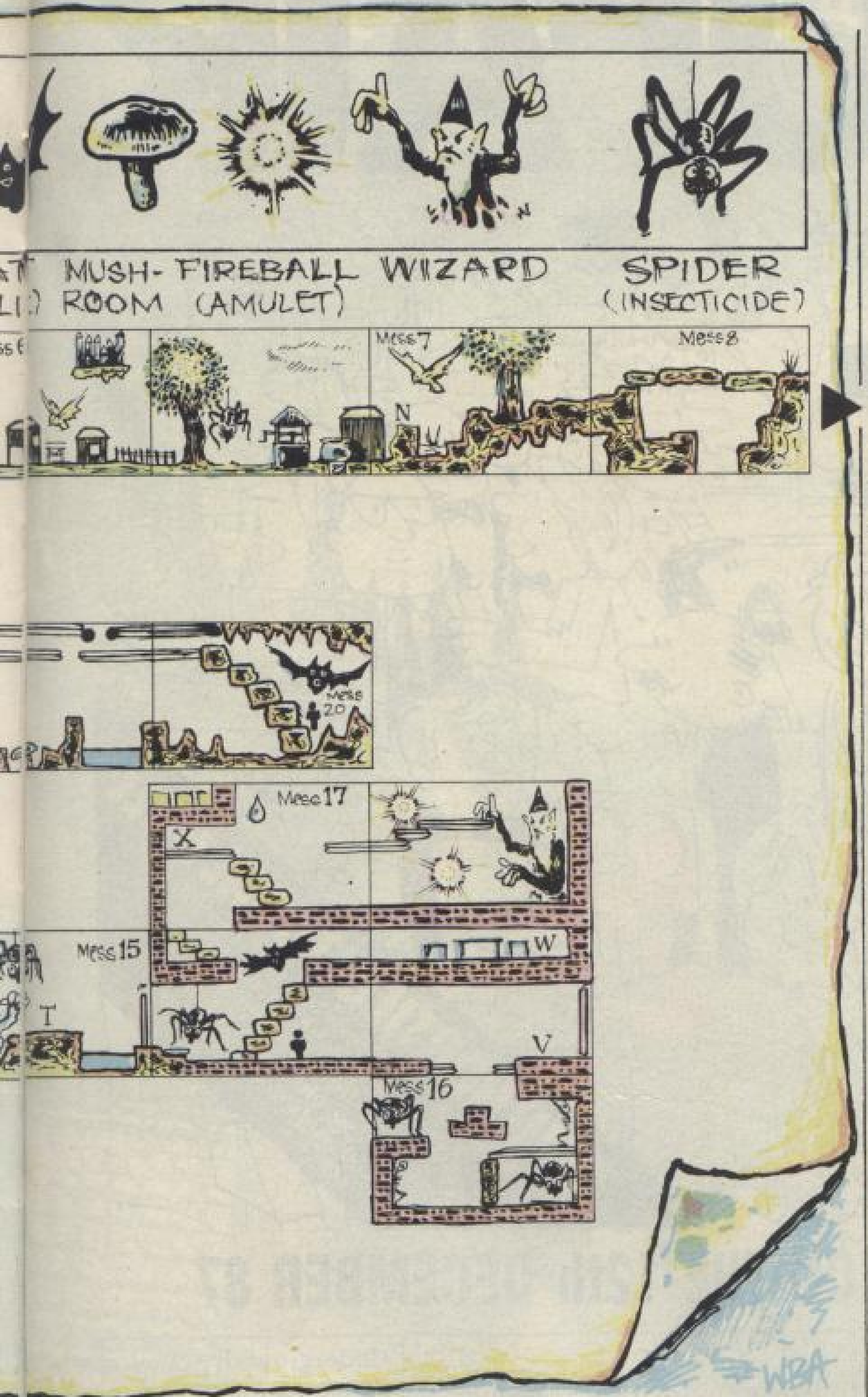
One early objective is to find the **Palyar briefing room**. The Palyars will pay you for transporting useful supplies and objects up to their colony craft. They'll also pay you a fee for captured Mechanoids.

Further on in this area, you can find a **communications room**, but it is not in working order. I'm sure that if you find some piece of equipment it can be repaired, and then maybe you can call for help.

In the **transporter rooms** you will find that some doors have a cross on – this indicates two-way travel. Other doors have a single diagonal which indicates one-way travel; in that case, you are either at the send end or the receive end (and if you're at the receive end you won't go anywhere!). Transporter rooms are a good way to get around, but be careful: some are unreliable.

The **colony craft** is at an altitude of 65000m. You should slow down on approach from 60000m. Your objective is to land on the square pad. There are three floors with named rooms and offers of purchase where you have the matching requirement. You can find a Mechanoid briefing, and have a briefing with their representative.

One way of **making money** is to carry out any business you have with the Mechanoids, and get the money from them. Then capture as many Mechanoids as possible and take them to the Palyars for your BIG fee.



DIZZY

Here's a fantastic map by Paul Forsyth **for Code Masters's** Dizzy **(78% Overall last issue). This is what the little messages in the map mean:**

Mess 1: And the yellow god forever gazes down
Mess 2: The mine entrance
Mess 3: The haunted chimney
Mess 4: The deserted diamond mines
Mess 5: There's a one-eyed yellow idol to the north of Katmandu
Mess 6: The village of Cigam
Mess 7: Graphics by James Wilson, music by David Whittaker, other great games by the same authors include: *Super Robin Hood*, *Ghost Hunters*, *Grand Prix Simulator* and *Professional Ski Simulator*. Aug 87
Mess 8: You are now entering the haunted forest
Mess 9: Strange: The ground sounds hollow
Mess 10: The mushroom caves
Mess 11: The hermit's rickety old treehouse: paying visitors only!
Mess 12: The green eye of the yellow god
Mess 13: There's a brokenhearted woman tends the grave of mad Carew
Mess 14: The hidden passage
Mess 15: The shark-infested moat
Mess 16: The waiting room: why not stay a while: why not stay forever
Mess 17: The dreaded castle of the evil wizard Zaks
Mess 18: The tomb of mad Carew
Mess 19: The crystal mountain
Mess 20: The secret caves

A: a gleaming emerald
B: free ACME birdseed
C: the graveyard key
D: a plastic raincoat
E: a miner's hard hat
F: a bottle of dry ice
G: a strong crowbar
H: a clove of garlic
I: ghost-hunter's laser
J: a purse of gold
K: a leprechaun wig
L: a protective amulet
M: a mucky grease gun
N: a burning torch
O: empty potion bottle
P: the gardener's spade
Q: a mushroom trowel
R: rusty bolt cutters
S: can of insecticide
T: vampire dux feather
U: a can of 3 in 1 oil
V: a horseshoe magnet
W: flask of troll brew
X: a broken heart
Y: a sharp diamond
Z: cloud's silver line



COMPLETING THE *TRIO* TRIO

At long last those fantastic Cairnpoke **POKEsters have sent in a routine to complete the** Trio **trio! A few months ago Lloyd and I printed some POKEs for** Airwolf II **and** Great Gurianos **from Elite's fantastic compilation, and now here are the** 3DC **POKEs to go with them. This routine gives you infinite oxygen and infinite jumps and makes you immune to the octopus . . .**

```
10 BORDER 0: PAPER 0: INK 7: BRIGHT 1:
   CLS: CLEAR 60000
20 PRINT AT 8,13;"3DC"
30 PRINT AT 10,7; "START 3DC TAPE"
40 PRINT AT 10,4; "POKES BY CAIRNPOKE
   1987": LOAD "" CODE
50 POKE 65201,205: POKE 65202,70:
   POKE 65203,254
60 FOR N=65094 TO 65109: READ A:
   POKE N,A: NEXT N
70 DATA 62,201,50,250,133,50,244,132
80 DATA 62,0,50,75,105,195,233,255
90 RANDOMIZE USR 64734
```

Wow, that's two whole Playing Tips sections with my ugly mug on top. In next month's Christmas Special there'll be as many maps as I can make the Art Department take!

Now get YOUR bits in the tips – please keep sending maps, hints, POKEs and threatening letters to the usual address.

And don't forget there's now £30 worth of software given away for the best map and £30 worth for the best tips and POKEs each month. There's no prize for threatening letters except a midnight visit from the Ludlow Mafia.

Oh, that usual address in full:

NICK ROBERTS
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SHROPSHIRE
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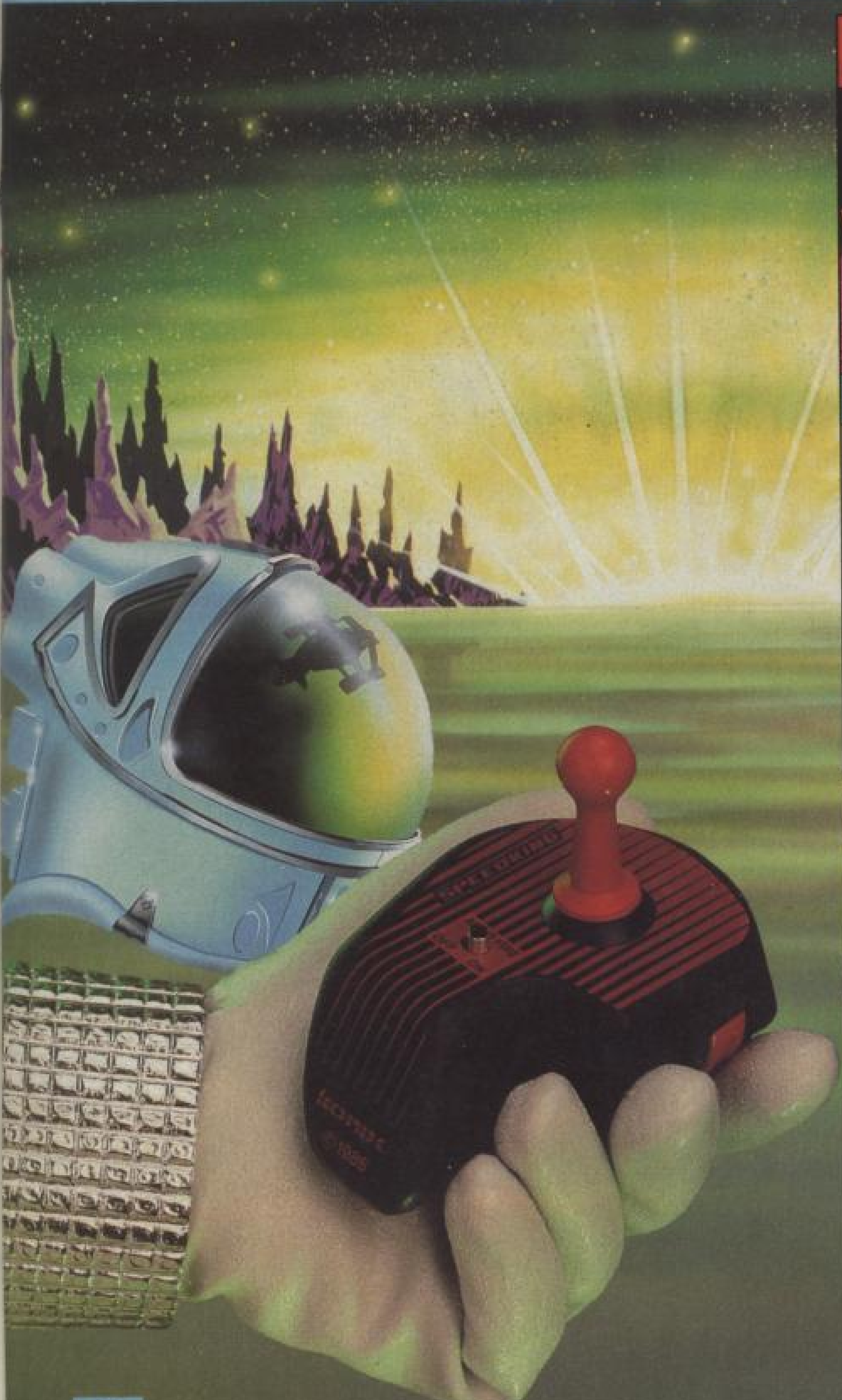
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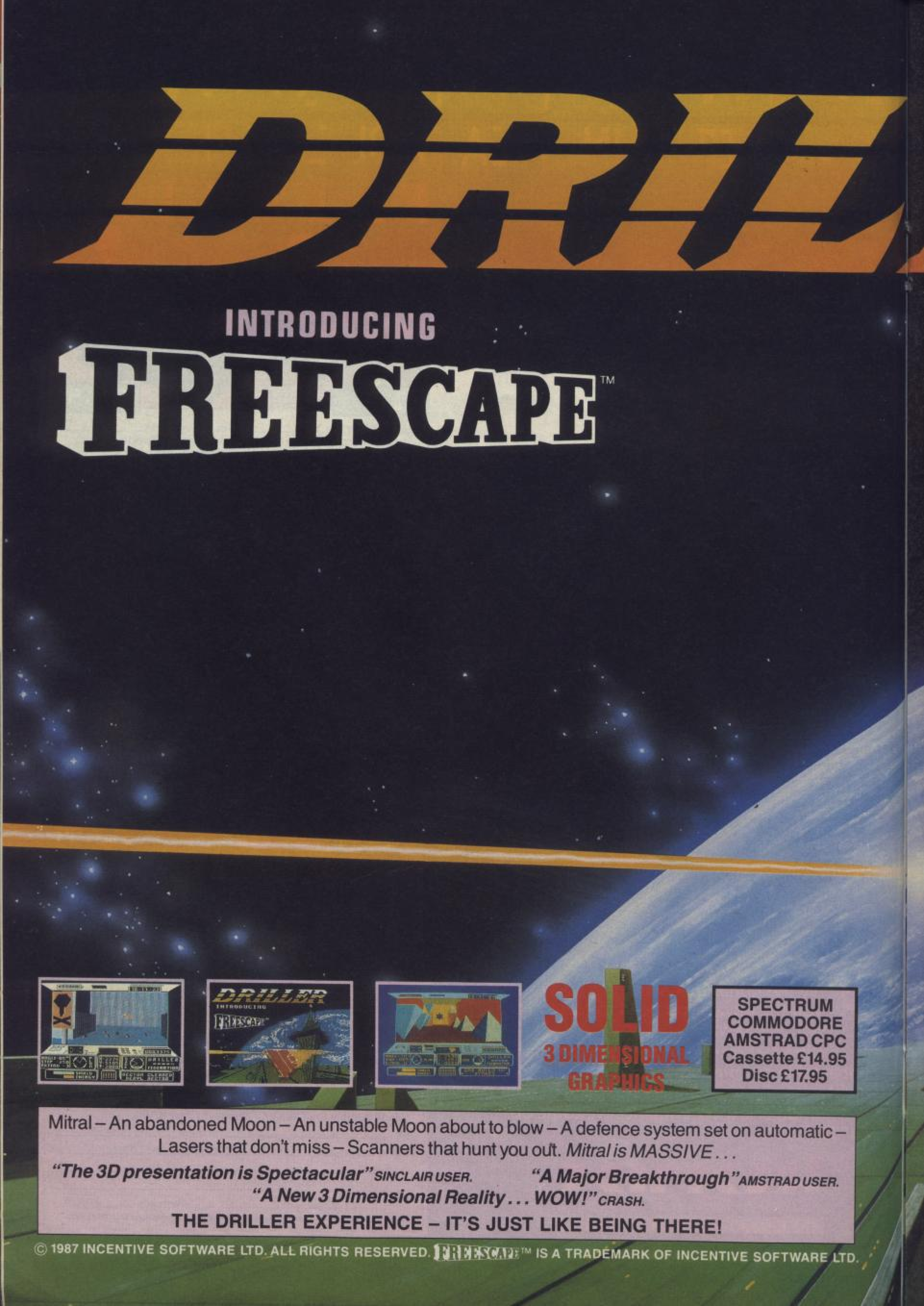
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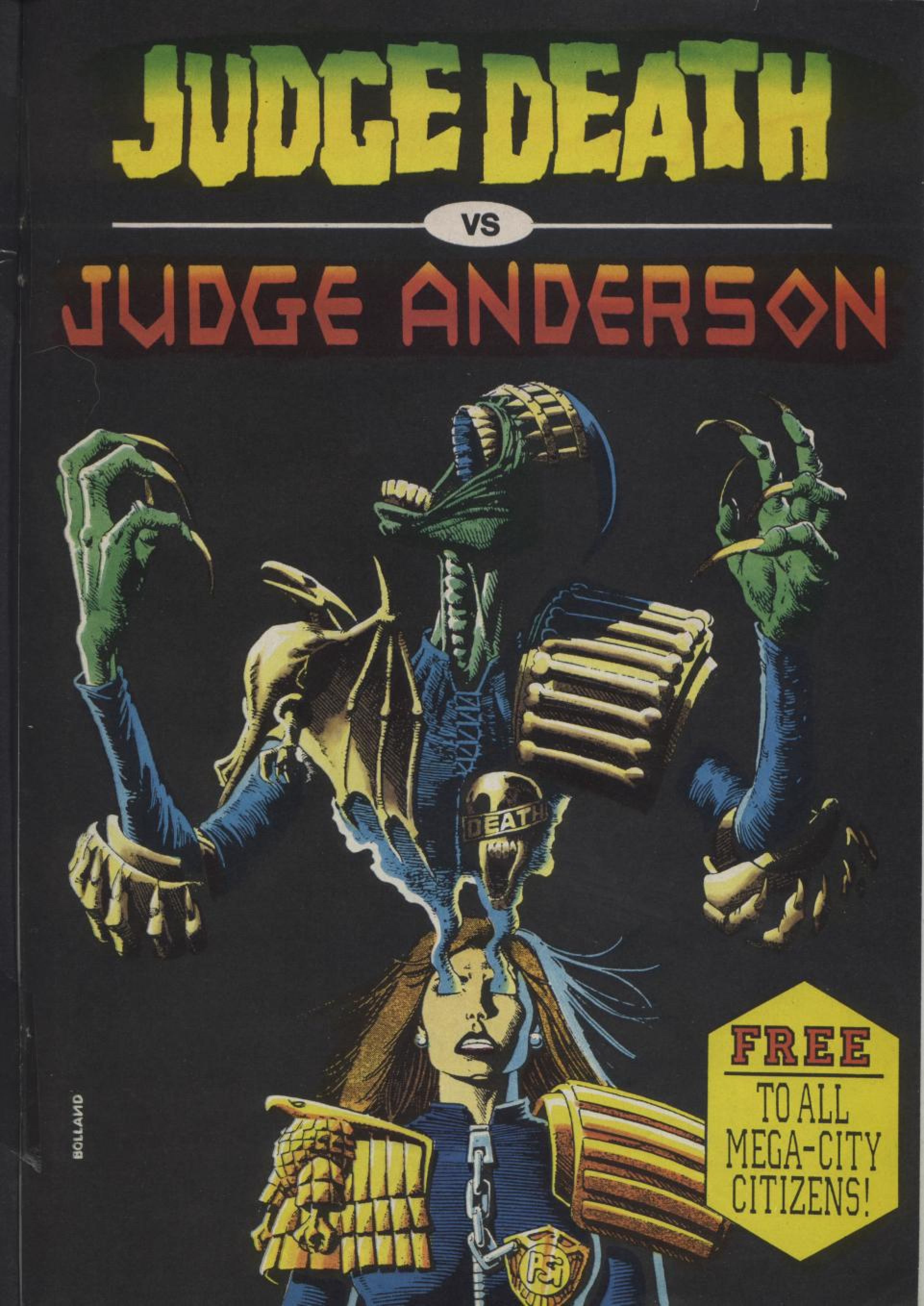
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JUDGE DEATH !
REVENGE
GET OUT OF MY HEAD, YOU GHOUL ! YOU'RE DEAD ! I KILLED YOU !
FOOL ! YOU CANNOT KILL WHAT DOESS NOT LIVE ! I WILL HAVE MY REVENGGE !
DOK ! THAT WAS SOME DREAM ! I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE HAD THAT CHOOBACHEEZ FOR SUPPER !
GRANT/GROVER
BRETT EWINS
T. FRAME


THE INTERCOM CRACKLES -
ANDERSON! YOU'RE REQUIRED IN PSI-LAB. STREET JUDGE JUST WHEELED IN A CROAKER.
EMSLAND'S DUTY TELEPATH - CAN'T HE HANDLE IT?
HE'S BUSY. SHIFT IT, WILL YOU?
ANDERSON...? IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG?
NO, I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A JIFF...
JUST DREAMT MY OLD PAL JUDGE DEATH CAME BACK ON A SOCIAL CALL - OR SHOULD I SAY, ANTI-SOCIAL CALL!
DEATH WAS ONE OF FOUR DARK JUDGES FROM A WARPED DIMENSION WHERE ALL LIFE WAS A CRIME. IN AN EPIC CONFRONTATION, ANDERSON HAD LAID THEM TO REST -
DEATH
IT WAS JUST A FLASHBACK - BAD MEMORY FROM AN OLD CASE. ALL PSIS GET THEM SOMETIMES.
PSI DIVISION - AN ELITE CORPS OF JUDGES SPECIALLY TRAINED FOR THEIR ABNORMAL MENTAL POWERS - CONSTITUTES A VITAL ELEMENT IN THE NEVER-ENDING FIGHT AGAINST MEGA-CITY CRIME...
274
YOU'LL NEVER MAKE ME TALK!
WHY BOTHER WHEN I CAN READ YOUR MIND!
CRIME DESK? JUST HAD A PREMONITION - EXPECT MULTIPLE HOMICIDE, SMOKATORIUM, TWENTY MINUTES!
IN A CUBICLE -
THIS CREEP WAS PICK-UP MAN IN THE SOUZA BABY KIDNAP. HE RUMBLED MY SURVEILLANCE - HAD TO WASTE HIM. WHEN HE DOESN'T SHOW UP WITH THE RANSOM, HIS PALS'LL KILL THE KID!
SO YOU WANT ME TO FIND THE KIDNAPPERS' BOLT-HOLE, HUH?
'KAY - WATCH ME MAKE THIS DEAD TURKEY SING!



FOR A SHORT WHILE AFTER DEATH, LATENT IMAGES ARE RETAINED BY THE BRAIN. A SKILLED TELEPATH CAN EXTRACT THEM -
SNATCHERS' LOCATION COMIN' THROUGH - BUT FAINT...
SOMEWHERE DARK... DRIPPING... HIGH RADIATION LEVEL. THERE'S A NAME THERE... FOCUS! GOTTA FOCUS!
IT'S A STREET. CROAK...NO - CROCK...CROCKER. CROCKER STREET!
THAT'S IT, GROGAN. YOUR STIFF'S GONE COLD ON ME.
IT'S ENOUGH. THE ONLY CROCKER IN THE CITY WITH A HIGH-RAD LEVEL IS IN SECTOR 61!
SOON, IN ONE OF THE MANY AREAS DEVASTATED BY THE APOCALYPSE WAR -
WE'VE STILL GOT TO PINPOINT THE SNATCHERS' EXACT LOCATION. I SHOULD BE ABLE TO TAP INTO THEIR THOUGHT WAVES AT THIS SHORT RANGE.
COME IN, NUMBER 9! YOUR TIME IS UP!
ANDERSON CAN'T RESIST HER LITTLE JOKE. NOT NORMAL FOR A JUDGE!
STILL, PSIs ARE HIGHLY-STRUNG. WE'VE GOT TO ALLOW THEM THEIR LITTLE PERSONALITY DEFECTS.
GOT 'EM! THREE OF THE CREEPS - SUB-BASEMENT, WILSON TUCKER BLOCK RUINS.
THERE IT IS!
THE JUDGES DESCEND INTO A MAZE OF DANK UNDERBLOCK PASSAGES -
WHAT THE HELL'S KEEPING HARLEY WITH THAT RANSOM?


PYKE - GO SEE IF THERE'S ANY SIGN OF HIM!
AND YOU SHUT THAT WHININ' BRAT UP OR I'LL BURY HIM, RANSOM OR NO RANSOM!
WAAAA
THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHIN'...
HARLEY! YOU THERE? IT'S PYKE HERE...
WHAPP!
AAAA!
YOUR CRADLE-SNATCHING DAYS ARE OVER, CREEPS!
JUDGES!
AAGH!
THE LAST KIDNAPPER BOLTS THE DOOR -
DON'T TRY TO GET IN, OR THE SOUZA KID'S DEAD! YOU HEAR - DEAD!
WAAAAA!



CONTINUED ON THIRD PAGE FOLLOWING

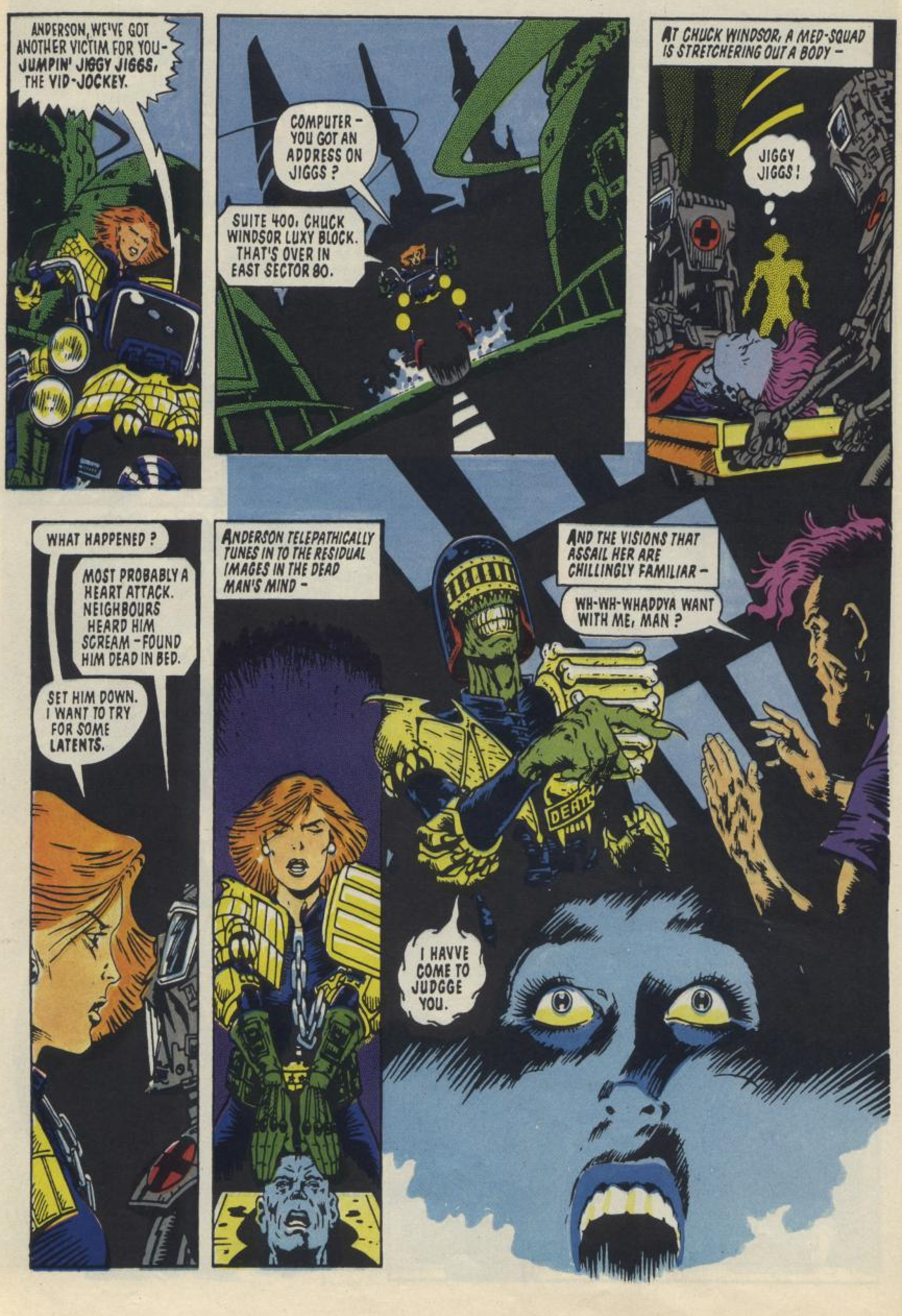

THE FOUR DARK JUDGES!
THIS CITY ISS GUILTY!
THE CRIME ISS LIFE!
FEAR


JUDGE DEATH
PIN-UP
THE SSENTENCE ISS...
DEATH!
MORTIS
DEATH


UNTIL!
DEAD END! HE'S GONE AGAIN – IF HE EVER WAS HERE!
CAN'T PUT THIS ONE DOWN TO CHOOBACHEEZ! BETTER SIGN MYSELF ON FOR A ROUTINE MEDICAL –
TURN AROUND, ANDERSSSON!
I HAVE COME TO SSTALK THISS WORLD AGAIN. . . AND YOU, ANDERSSON, WILL BE MY INSSTRUMENT OF DESSTRUCCTION!
DEATH
BRETT EWINS

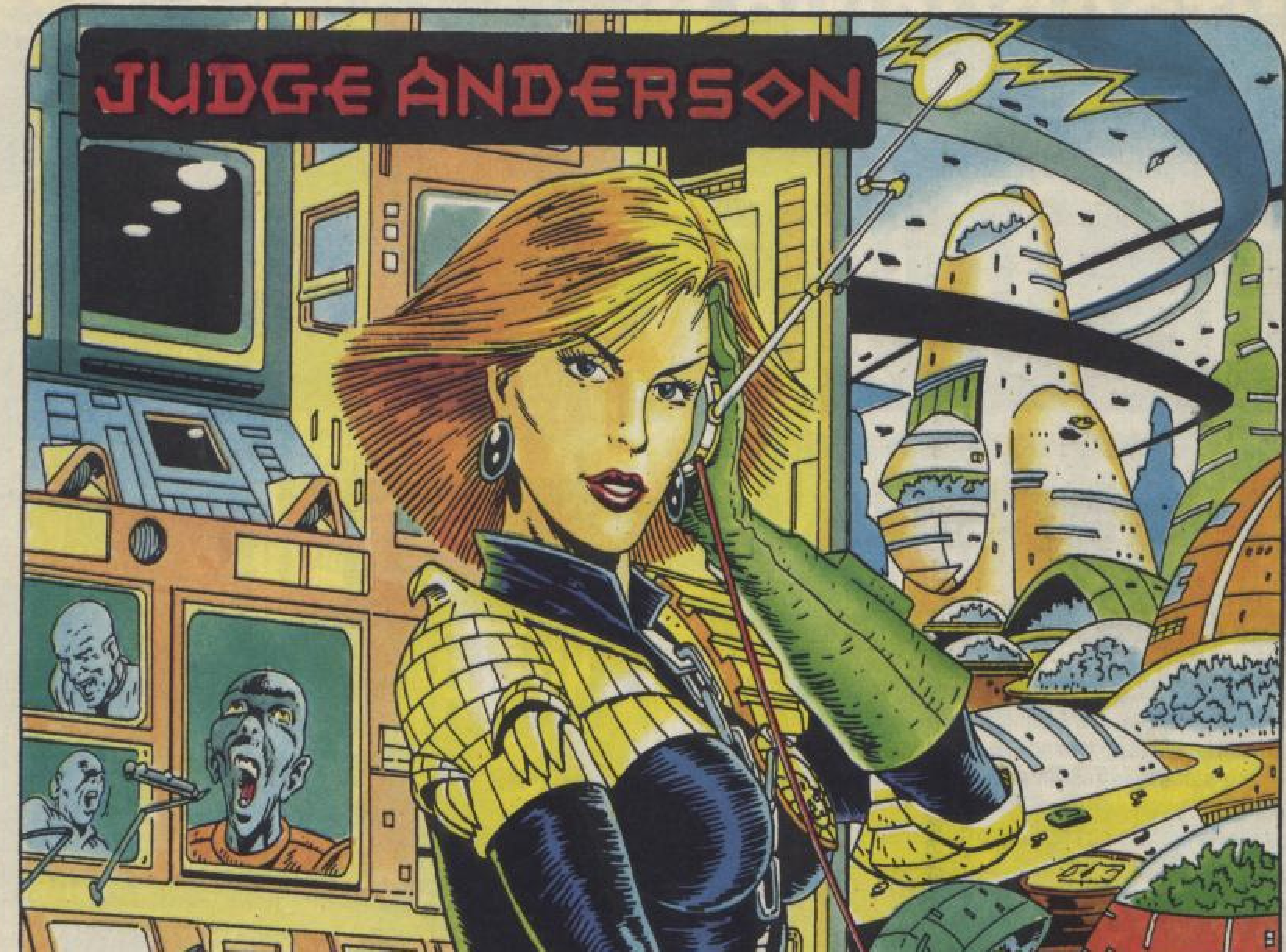


I HAVVE RETURNED TO JUDGGE THISSS CITY!
THE CRIME ISSS LIFE. THE SENTENCCE ISSS DEATHHH!
ALL WILL BE PUNISHHHED!
ALL WILL DIE... DIE... DIE...
ANDERSON! YOU OKAY?
WAAAAH!
WAY YOU TOOK OFF BACK THERE, I THOUGHT YOU'D SEEN A GHOST OR SOMETHING!
A GHOST...YEAH, SORT OF. A BAD MEMORY FROM THE PAST. HAPPENS TO US PSIS SOMETIMES.
ANDERSON AND GROGAN HAD BEEN WORKING ON A KIDNAP CASE -
LISTEN, GROGAN, I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO DO. YOU HANG ON HERE WITH THE BABY TILL THE MED-SQUADS ARRIVE.
WAAAAH!
HEY, C'MON! I DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT KIDS. YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME LIKE THIS!
ANDERSON!
WWAAAAAAAAAHH!

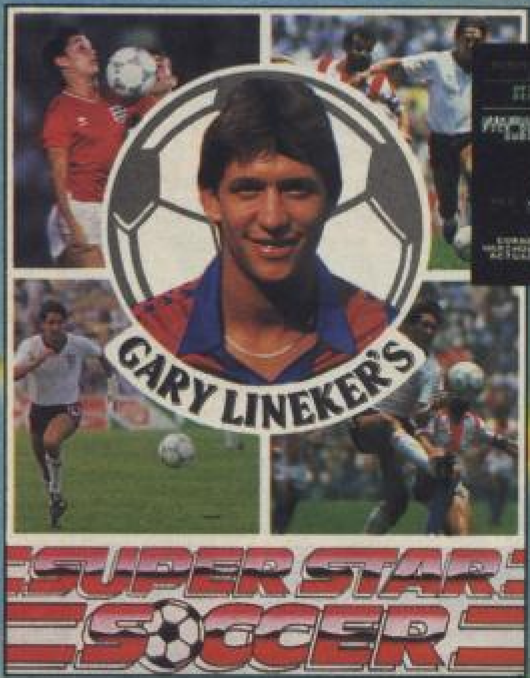

ANDERSON, WE'VE GOT ANOTHER VICTIM FOR YOU- JUMPIN' JIGGY JIGGS, THE VID-JOCKEY.
COMPUTER - YOU GOT AN ADDRESS ON JIGGS ?
SUITE 400: CHUCK WINDSOR LUXY BLOCK. THAT'S OVER IN EAST SECTOR 80.
AT CHUCK WINDSOR, A MED-SQUAD IS STRETCHERING OUT A BODY -
JIGGY JIGGS!
WHAT HAPPENED ?
MOST PROBABLY A HEART ATTACK. NEIGHBOURS HEARD HIM SCREAM - FOUND HIM DEAD IN BED.
SET HIM DOWN. I WANT TO TRY FOR SOME LATENTS.
ANDERSON TELEPATHICALLY TUNES IN TO THE RESIDUAL IMAGES IN THE DEAD MAN'S MIND -
AND THE VISIONS THAT ASSAIL HER ARE CHILLINGLY FAMILIAR -
WH-WH-WHADDYA WANT WITH ME, MAN ?
I HAVVE COME TO JUDGGE YOU.


B-B-BUT I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING!
YOU LIVE. THAT ISSS SSUFFICCIENT.
THE SSSENTENCCE ISSS DEATHHHH!
AAAAAAH!
THEN DEATH IS HERE!
BUT HE CAN'T BE! I MAY BE SCATTY, BUT MY MEMORY'S NOT THAT BAD. I FOLLOWED THE CREEP BACK TO HIS OWN WORLD AND LAID HIM TO REST PERMANENT. I KNOW I DID!
YET JUMPIN' JIGGY JIGGS HERE SAYS DIFF!
ONE THING'S FOR SURE — SOMETHING'S GOING ON. AND I BETTER FIND OUT WHAT.


AT THE GRAND HALL OF JUSTICE IS LOCATED THE BLACK MUSEUM -
BRAIN OF JUDGE CAL.
HERE, ON PERMANENT EXHIBITION, A COLLECTION OF GRISLY RELICS - A CONSTANT REMINDER OF EVIL IN ALL ITS FORMS -
STUFFED KLEGG
THE DARK JUDGES' DIMENSION JUMP. OLD STONEY FACE AND I USED IT TO FOLLOW THEM BACK TO THEIR OWN DIMENSION - DEADWORLD.
4 DARK JUDGES
I CAN USE IT TO GO BACK TO THEIR DIMENSION AGAIN, CHECK 'EM OUT.
NOT EXACTLY STANDARD PROCEDURE, BUT THEN THIS SITUATION'S ANYTHING BUT STANDARD.
I'M GONNA LAY THIS GHOST ONCE AND FOR ALL!
ROUND TWO:
THE BATTLE CONTINUES IN TITAN BOOKS' JUDGE ANDERSON BOOK 1


JUDGE ANDERSON
BRETT EWINS

GET TO GRIPS WITH

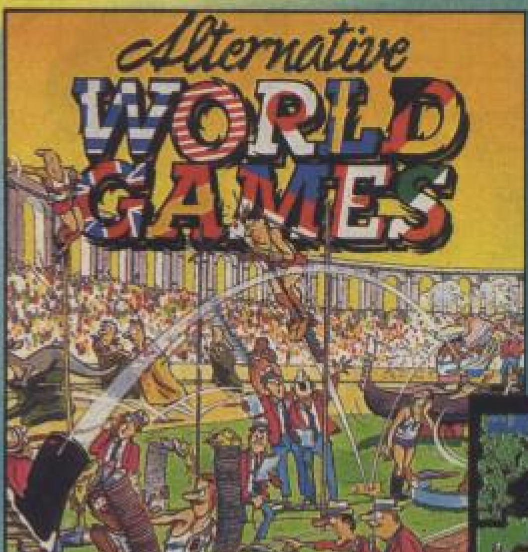




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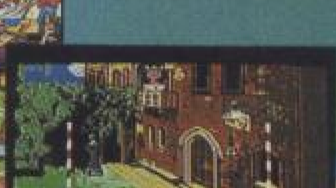
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TALES OF THE FUTURE

TITAN SIGHTS THE ICEBERG



TITAN BOOKS began publishing five years ago with an album of Judge Dredd stories. Everybody told Nick Landau, Titan's Managing Director, it would never work – but that first book sold out within two months. And Titan's on its twentieth Judge Dredd compilation now.

Soon Titan was compiling other *2000AD* strips into albums so readers could get whole stories in one piece. These collections sell throughout Britain and America, and they're just as well known as the *2000AD* comic itself.

Titan has expanded into buying and publishing American graphic novels and packaging the more adult-oriented American comics, very new to the British public. The first of these was *Batman; The Dark Knight Returns* by Alan Moore; after its release in December this grim tale spent two months in the *Sunday Times* Best Seller List. Next came *Swamp Thing*, again by Alan Moore, and Book Two in this series has already sold out.

'So we discovered that there is a very different market for comics in Britain and indeed the States,' says Managing Director Landau. 'Penguin is also beginning to realise this new market for comics; it's just released *Maus* by Art Spiegelman, which is the story of the Holocaust in a graphic-novel format. These graphic novels are selling into mainstream bookshops, to people who wouldn't normally walk into a speciality comic shop and pick up a copy of, say, *2000AD*. The fact that it has a spine and can be shelved makes it accessible to people who would turn up their nose at a pulp comic'.

He continues: 'You're able, with a Titan book, to go and buy something that you'll feel quite proud to have sitting on your living-room table.

'What we're going to do is select the cream of English-language comics and also European comics and package them into a trade-size *(large)* paperback book format and market them into the mainstream bookshops like WH Smith, Foyles and even Harrods and make these comics accessible to a readership that's discovering these new comics for the first time.

'We're also producing a range of material that's not just the traditional sci-fi and superhero character, a lot of the books we're producing are a lot more sophisticated than that; for example, *Love And Rockets*, *Heartbreak Soup* and *Swamp Thing*. We're educating people in terms of what the comics medium has to offer in the same way as the film medium offers a range of material. Sci-fi and superhero comics are the tip of the iceberg.

'In our English-speaking culture, comics have been relegated to the children's market, mostly because of Superman, as comics have always meant superheroes. Outside our culture, in Japan for instance, comics, in book form, represent 25% of all publishing – their comics are the size of telephone directories, and published every week.

'Mainstream publishers like Penguin and Warner Books are beginning to commission writers and artists to do sophisticated stories to sell on the mass market. So we're seeing a renaissance of a new medium in the English-speaking world, of which Titan is at the forefront in Britain.'

BEN STONE

BEHIND THE LICENCE

CULT COMIC *2000AD* has been going zarjazzy for over 500 weeks, building a devoted following and its own futuristic language ('zarjaz' means something like 'great, fantastic') despite changes in content and style.

In the two years after its March 1977 foundation, *2000AD* merged with several other comics which were having financial difficulties. These mergers built up *2000AD*'s own readership and reinforced its editorial backbone as the better artists, writers and strips were kept on – and many like scriptwriter Alan Moore and artist Dave Gibbons have gone on to greater things.

Many of *2000AD*'s characters have become legends – particularly Judge Dredd, who's appeared in *2000AD* almost every week since it started.

His haunt is Mega City One, an enormous metropolis which covers most of northeast America (New York, Chicago etc). This city was built just after the Third World War to protect the northeastern population from the arid Rad-Lands which surround the city and the evils they contain.

The Judges are a kind of Mega police force: it's their job to keep the peace and uphold the City's Law – with iron fists! There are different kinds of Judges to deal with all the different crimes that have evolved in the overcrowded high-tech conurbation.

It's Judge Anderson featured in the CRASH pull-out, but Judge Dredd is the most renowned of these lawmen of the future – and the star of Piranha's licence.

Back in the real-life megacity, the most recent change at *2000AD* was a change of ownership: in July the publishing giant IPC's Youth Group, which produced *2000AD*, was bought out by BMPC, Robert Maxwell's magazine group.

Maxwell also owns the *Daily Mirror* and *Sunday Mirror*, Mirrorsoft and CRASH's printers! BMPC renamed the IPC Youth Group Fleetway Publications – ironic, because IPC had taken over Fleetway in the Sixties. Zarjaz or what?

BEN STONE



2000AD GAMES KEEP ON TRUCKING

THE STRANGE WORLD of *2000AD*'s Judges is difficult enough to put on the Spectrum screen as it is – and Piranha sent the task to Hungary, where the comic's hardly heard of!

Still, the Budapest-based programming team Hobbyte soon got into the shoot-'em-up mayhem. Says Creative Manager Tamás Révbiró: 'It's very near to the kind of science fiction very popular in Hungary. It's a crooked kind of science fiction with lots of violence and bloodshed. And the technological gadgets are already well-known through other authors, so it's not totally new.'

'First the programmers and then the graphics artist read them over and over and learned them by heart,' recalls Révbiró.

Meanwhile, back in the piranha tank, programmer Mike Lewis is working on the game of *2000AD* heroine Halo Jones – based on Titan Books's first anthology, *The Ballad Of Halo Jones*. It'll be out around Easter.

'The basic idea is that Halo Jones goes shopping,' says Lewis. 'The idea is getting to the shopping mall and back again.'



There's been a comics boom in Hungary in the last 18 months, though mostly of film tie-ins and Disney characters – 'they have no cultural value whatever so they were not supported by the government, but they make profit'.

The quite different *2000AD* comics went down well with Hobbyte's ten programmers, who are preparing *Judge Death* for Spectrum, Commodore 64 and Amstrad. (Their previous credits include Ocean's 1984 *Chinese Juggler* and Mirrorsoft's Issue 26 Smash *Spitfire 40*, and they've often worked with the London-based software developers Andromeda.)

Graphics for the planned five levels and 512 screens are by Carl Cropley, who worked with Lewis on Melbourne House's adventure *The Mystery Of Arkham Manor* (Issue 43) – but the star feature is the randomisation of *Halo Jones*'s tunnel world. Different tunnels are blocked each time you play so, says Smith, 'you'll have to map the thing but no two games will be the same'.

Piranha's also considering a game of *2000AD*'s strip *Ace Trucking Co.*.

BARNABY PAGE

THOSE 2000AD GAMES IN GREKK

		CRASH Overall	Issue
Halo Jones	Piranha	release Easter 1988	
Judge Death	Piranha	review next issue	
Judge Dredd	Melbourne House	42%	38
Nemesis The Warlock	Martech	61%	40
Rogue Trooper	Piranha	79%	36
Sláine	Martech	review next issue	
Strontium Dog	Quicksilva	42%	13



AND WIN
A JUDGE DEATH BOOK
A JUDGE ANDERSON BOOK
A JUDGE DEATH T-SHIRT
AND THE JUDGE DEATH GAME

AGAINST their better judgment, those Mega City munchers at Piranha are offering **ten** sets of prizes to **ten** unlucky CRASH perps, sorry, readers.

All you have to do win two books, a Judge Death T-shirt *and* Piranha's new game (review next issue!) is devise a bit of *2000AD* language.

The comic's full of Mega City talk like this:

Borag thungg	Greetings
Splundig vur thrigg	Farewell
Zarjaz	Fantastic
Scrotnig	- ditto -
Quaequam blas	My goodness!
Ghafflebette	Out of this world
Florix grabundae	Many thanks
Frognum gruelis	April Fool
Grexnix	Idiot
Snut	?★@!
Drokk	- ditto -
By Stomm/By Grud	I say!

To win the Piranha prizes just come up with the best, most futuristic-sounding word you can to describe the new *Judge Death* game!

Send your entries to GHAFFLEBETTE GOODIES UP FOR GRABS COMP, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB* to reach us by Christmas. As usual, the decision of the Judges in all respects is terrifyingly final.

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

.... POSTCODE ....

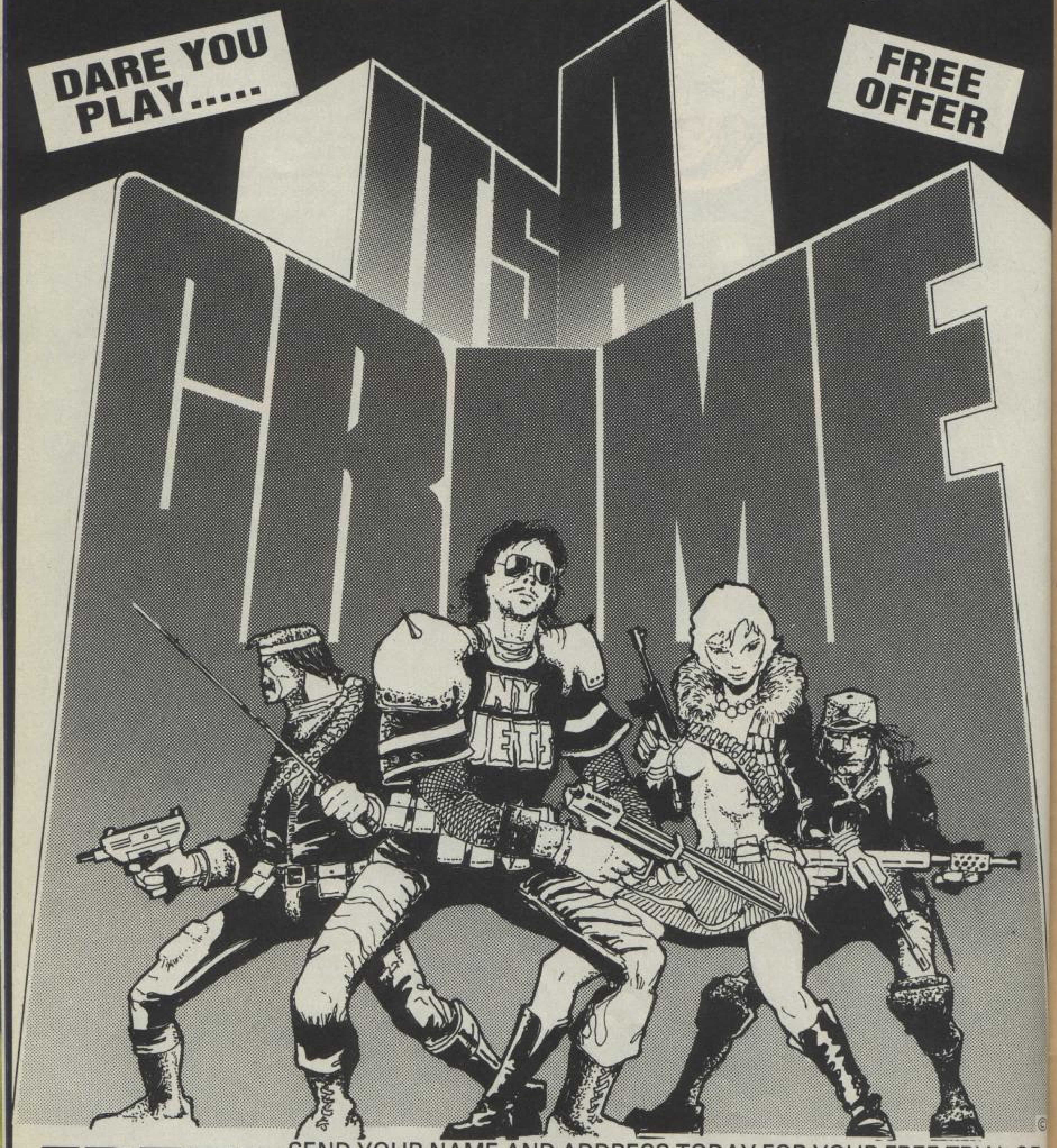
BORAG THUNGG! BY GRUD, THAT NEW PIRANHA GAME *JUDGE DEATH* IS TERRIFICALLY ....


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1987 PBM MAILBOX



BRENDON KAVANAGH brings the good news on playing by mail – new games, your letters answered and the next national convention. Look out for readers' reviews next month!

PBM CONVENTION

It's that time of year again. You guessed – The Third British PBM Convention. The date is February 20 1988 and the venue, once more, is the Porchester Centre, Queensway, London (near Royal Oak Station: just turn left and the centre is 300 yards up the road on the right).

It'll cost two pounds to get in, but if you're wise and hold your startups till the convention you'll soon more than save that sum. By all accounts there should be at least 40 companies present to flog their wares. Other attractions include a bar and a café, not to mention live demonstrations.

Doors open at 10.30am. Bar opens 11.30. Doors close about 5pm. Have a nice day!

PBM FORUM

One or two interesting letters here – have you anything to say about the PBM world? Any exploits to brag about? Snippets of information to give? Moans to moan about? Or simply questions to ask? Write and speak your mind to: Brendon Kavanagh, PBM Mailbox, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.*

RISKY BUSINESS

Dear Brendon
Is there a PBM version of the board game *Risk*? 'Tis great fun as FTF and seems to be a simplified version of *Diplomacy*.

Chris McCarthy, Liscard, Wallasey

Besides playing Diplomacy *itself, perhaps you could have a look at* Crisis *(reader's reviews in the Christmas CRASH at your newsagent's soon, but not soon enough I'm sure) by M.A.G. – it's a similar game design. Anybody out there with anything to add?*

BK

TROLL'S TOP?

Dear Brendon
I've read your past few mailboxes with interest, and PBMing, to me, seems to be an ideal hobby. Would you recommend *Troll's Bottom* as a first game?

Francis Banks, Preston, Lancashire

All I can say about Troll's Bottom *is that just about everybody I know who has tried the game has enjoyed it.*

Anyway, Francis, to answer your question: yes, Troll's Bottom *is a wise choice if you are looking for a simple game to play which isn't overpriced.*

But there's no need to start with a simple game! You'll soon get used to the system no matter how difficult the game is. If you can afford it, it could be worth trying one of the more established and involved games to start in the hobby.

BK

PLAYING OVERSEAS

Dear Brendon,
I am one of those many people living overseas who read about play-by-mail games but do not have any information about joining one.

I know that international games *exist* – but that's all! Could you give me the name of a good game and the address of the company that produces or moderates it? Oh yes, and how much does it cost to play?

I hope you can help me as soon as possible; I don't receive CRASH till three months after it's issued.

Frankie Kerston, Richmond, Nelson, New Zealand

Now then, Frankie, you have a number of options available to you. As you live in a country which sadly does not spawn many PBM companies (in fact, I don't know of any) all markets are equally convenient to you. You could play any British or American game without any problem other than the time delay with the post.

But this needn't be a problem – most British companies run international variants of their games which use long deadlines of perhaps up to three weeks (your air-mail letter took seven days to reach Ludlow from New Zealand).

I suggest you buy a copy of Flagship *from Chameleon Games,* GPO Box 2302, Sydney 2001, Australia, *which should help you. You could always play an Australian game –* Flagship *has details of several companies.*

BK

SETTING UP A GAME

Dear Brendon
A friend and I have been caught up in the play-by-mail mania and are involved in about five games each. We would like to set up our own PBM game. This would run in our school and on the open gaming market. Obviously, we would like this game to be fairly successful, therefore we need quite a lot of information on postal gaming:

How do we start it up? Keep it going? To what use should we put the computer (a BBC model B in our case)? Do we need any special equipment to start it up? How do we get our own PO Box?

I hope that you can help us!

Paul Dobek, Flixton, Manchester

Thank you, Paul. As far as running a PBM game is concerned, I only know what I have found out through chatting with gamers who have (or do) run games. Basically, if a good system is devised, things can hardly go wrong. Even KJC Games was in a similar situation to your own once!

Things to bear in mind are:

There's a lot of ***responsibility*** *in running a PBM game; it could go on for years. That's one turn every two weeks, say, for each player. Are you certain you can cope with this? As you are still at school, you must consider (though I hate to sound like an old teacher) your exams. Maybe you should start small, with something easier to cope with while you learn about running a game, by running a game just for people at your school.*

Ask around; see how many people would be interested in playing. All you need ***charge*** *is perhaps £1 or £2 for the whole game (as long as it isn't too long) – that shouldn't put people off, and remember that if the game is just run in the school there's no need for a PO Box or postage costs!*

Anyway, find out how many people would be interested in playing your game. Once you know this figure you can sit down and figure out a game ***scenario*** *to fit all the players. Create a simple but effective game using simply the BBC B and a printer (if you have access to disk drives and know how to use them to store retrievable data for the computer there's no harm in using it . . .), something easy to write and fun to play. Your computer's memory is limited, so don't go overboard with details!*

Graphics are not really very important in many games, but then again if you can create something simple, effective and useful on a ***turnsheet*** *then by all means do so. Since you already play a few games, you'll know how to produce the turnsheet. Work out* ***how long*** *your game is to run. If it's just for your fellow students, there should be no difficulty in getting turns in – perhaps weekly deadlines could be set to speed the game along. Maybe run the game from the start of the autumn term through to the end of the spring term – that gives at least 25 turns, which should be ample for a fast moving game.*

One more practical point to think about: the ***order forms****. Once more, I'd go for the easy option. Take the order cards for* It's A Crime! *as an example; they're easy to read and fill out. All you enter is the player number and the codes for the player's turn, and the computer does the rest. You could also set up a posting point in the school's computer room, and let everyone know where it is.*

Anyway, Paul, that's my suggestion. It's not quite play-by-mail, but then there's no bother with handling cheques and postal orders, posting disks or making expensive phone calls. And just think of the possible pleasures! There's plenty of time to start a war during the lunch hour . . .

BK

IT'S A ZINE!

Karl Laithwaite of Wigan writes with news of *PBM File*, a fanzine he and his friends have launched. They produce it on a duplicating machine; some of it is typed and some of it is handwritten.

The first issue features *It's A Crime!*, and the editors plan to cover a different game each issue; it's all very factual and to the point, though it might look a bit neater reduced on a photocopier to A5 size.

Each issue costs 70p and *PBM File* can be contacted through Philip Rankin, c/o Karl Laithwaite, *5 Ludlow Street* (honestly - Man Ed), *Standish, Wigan, Lancashire WN6 0QN.*

NEW GAMES

DROP ZONE

J Simmons of Chichester writes about his nicely-produced new PBM battle simulation, *Drop Zone*, where the player leads a mobile infantry squad attacking a hostile planet. Missions are assigned and after each successful mission, your private army grows in strength.

It all seems nicely figured out, and the rulebook is impressive. For more information write to J Simmons at *30 Burlington Gardens, Selsey, Chichester, West Sussex PO20 0DP*.



EPIC III

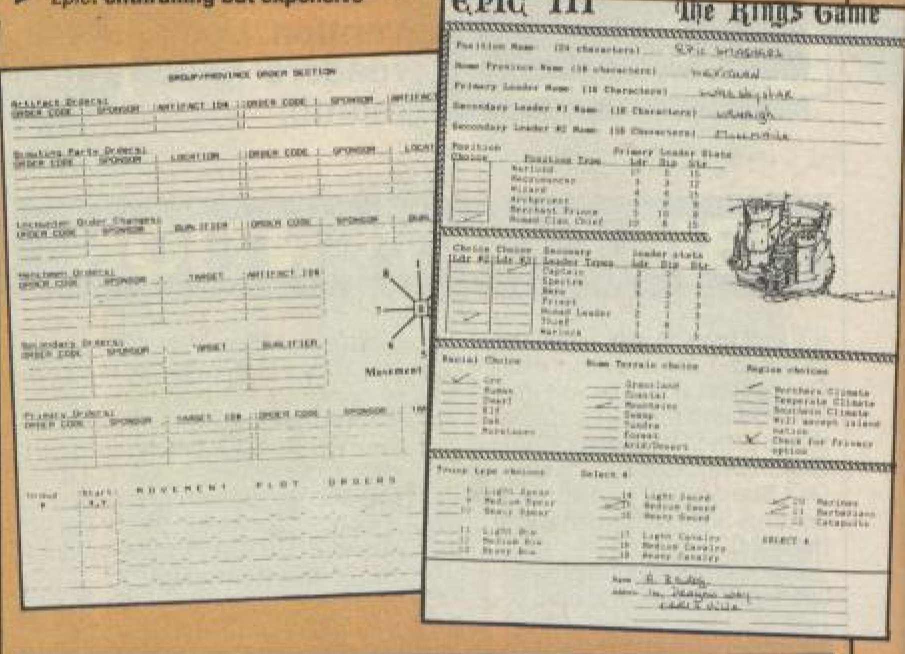
JUST a brief mention for this game: not because of any major fault, because of the price . . . it could end up costing as much as £5 a week. *Epic* (now in its third edition) is a role-playing game in which you play any one of six characters (warlords, princes and chiefs).

There are different races of people and different kinds of terrain, and your workload includes logistics, population management, offence/defence, diplomacy, and land and sea navigation.

You also have 22 types of weapons available, and some magic as an added bonus. But the troops can be handicapped on difficult terrain.

It sounds enthralling. Write to the British moderators, Rhann Postal Games, at *PO Box 12, Sarisbury Green, Southampton SO3 6YL*. Don't forget the SAE for a reply.

► *Epic*: **enthralling but expensive**



ECLIPSE

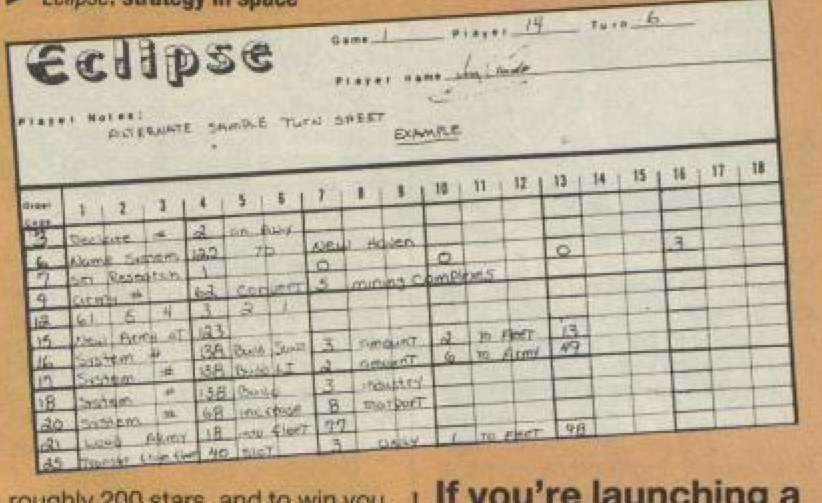
LIKE *Epic*, this is from Rhann – but the science-fiction game is as different from *Epic* as could be. *Eclipse* is intended to be an introductory PBM game for 12 to 20 players. It's set in a cluster of roughly 200 stars, and to win you must conquer two thirds of the stars (each star possesses a planetary system). You can do it alone or with the help of others as a faction (nice scope for diplomacy there . . .).

Eclipse is basically a strategy game, with battles involving star fleets and planetary armies. Orders are made using those unfriendly computer codes mixed with a bit of English. This can be confusing at first, but things soon fit together, and the rulebook is clear and informative.

It's a simple game, but like *Epic* it's not cheap, with turn fees ranging from £1.50 to £2.50 depending upon how active you are in the game.

Get further details from Rhann Postal Games at the address under the *Epic* heading.

► *Eclipse*: **strategy in space**



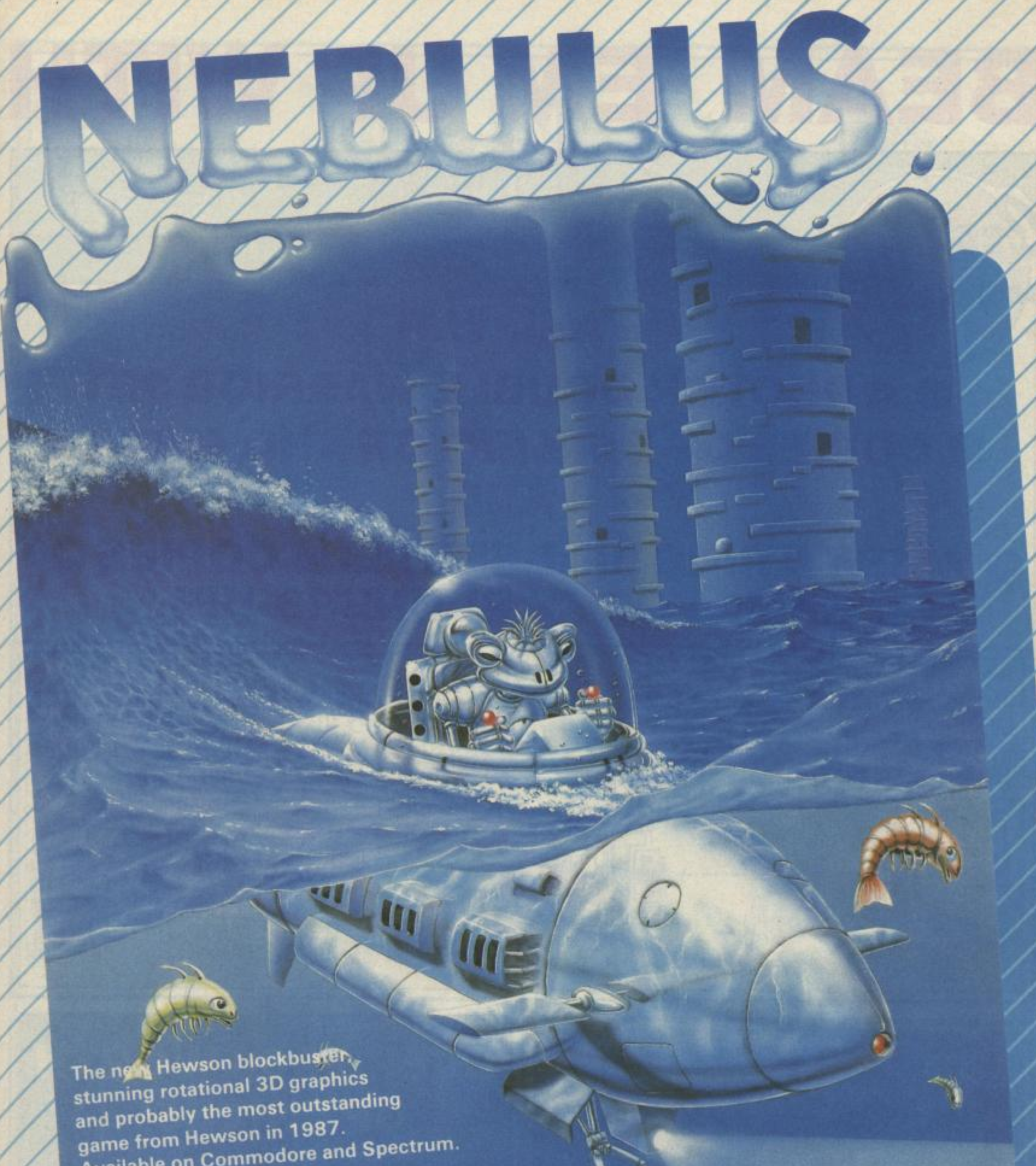
PLANTAGENET

HERE'S a real treat for anyone interested in 14th-century Britain. You take the role of a nobleman or noble lady (English, Welsh or Scottish), and you can buy a castle and run your own private army. You can also thrust yourself forward into public life and enter the government, the king's army, or the church.

If the lord next door becomes a thorn in your side, your army is there to deal with him, and if skirmishes with the neighbours don't provide enough excitement, you can attack France as well. A nice touch is the newsletter (named *The Herald*) which lets you know what's going on in an olde style of Englishe . . . very enjoyable if you like that sort of thing.

As for costs, it's £5 for setup, rulebook, character profile sheet and the first three turns. *Plantagenet* is run in real time – turns are processed every day, and every day the game calendar moves on a day. The producers are: Destrier Games, *PO Box 74, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S60 1RS*.

If you're launching a new professional PBM game, or you're running one that hasn't been covered yet, send details and a phone number to Brendon Kavanagh at CRASH



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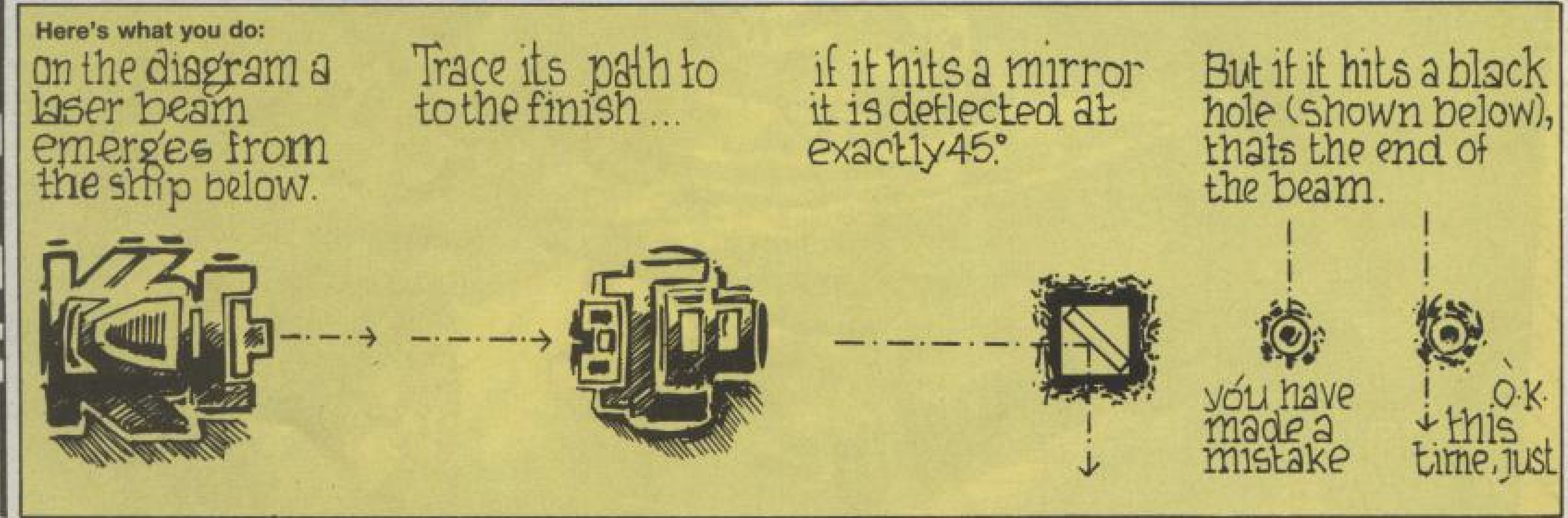
Crash Competition

AND WIN

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- **COPIES OF *DEFLEKTOR* AND *MASK II***

AND

- ***MASK II* RING BINDERS PLUS COPIES OF THE GAME FOR 45 RUNNERS-UP!**





When you've found the laser's path from A to B, send the diagram and form (or a clear photocopy) to: LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT COMP, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB* by Christmas. As usual, the decision of CRASH's appointed judges in all respects is absolutely correct, so no arguments will be entered into.

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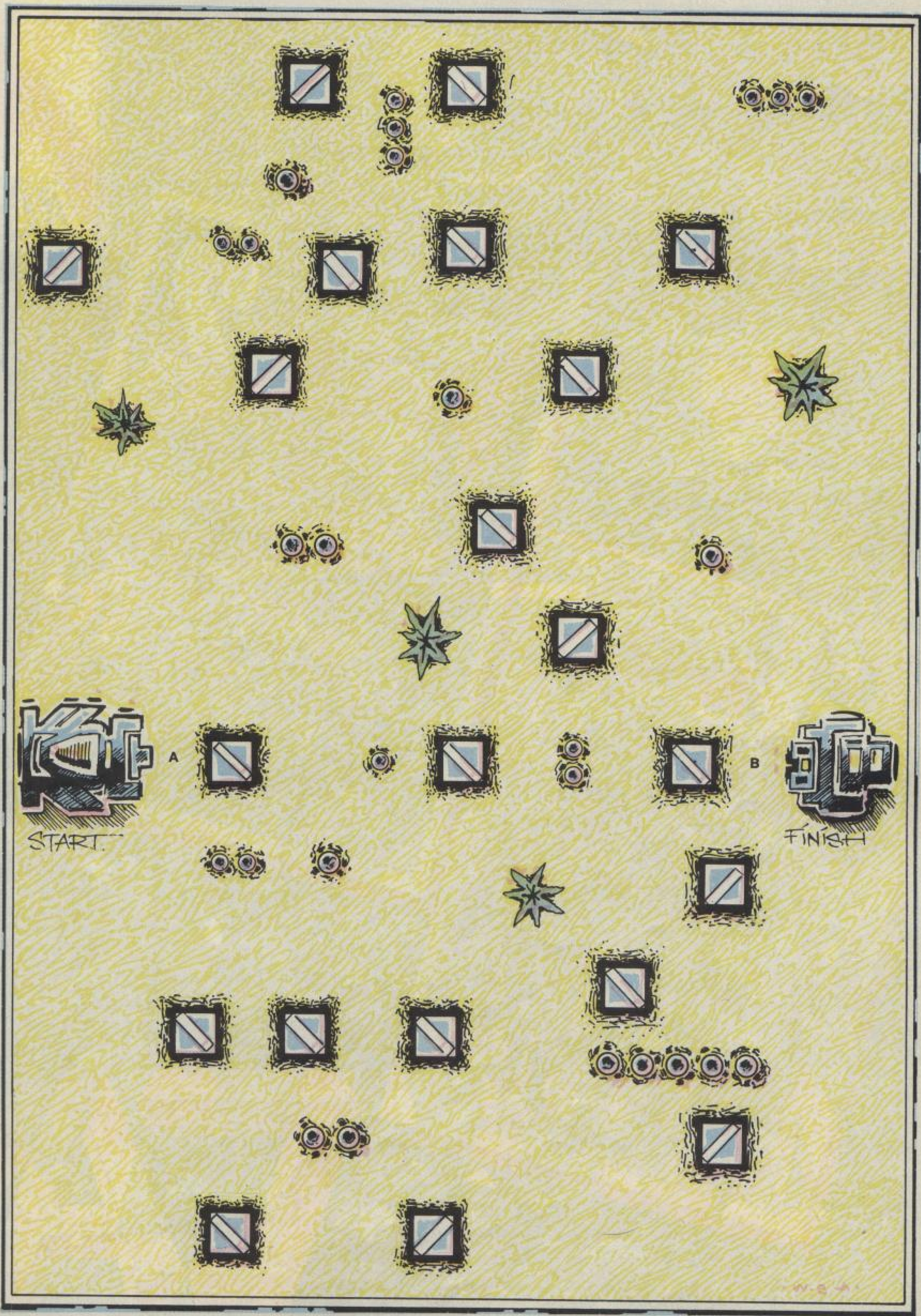
THOSE GRAPHICAL GREMLINS just can't choose between their two new games, *Mask II* and *Deflektor* – so they're giving away copies of them both!

(*Deflektor* earns 77% Overall on page 123 of this issue; *MASK II* will be out soon, and its *MASK I* pulled in 81% in Issue 45.)

They couldn't quite decide what gruelling tests to put you through, either. But eventually everyone agreed defeating VENOM and saving the world was a *little* tricky for 93,000 buyers of CRASH to all do at once, so this comp is based on *Deflektor* – and it's probably as infuriating as the puzzle game itself.

The **first prize** is appropriate, too: besides the two games you could win LJN's Photon Double Warrior Set, the top-of-the-market two-person light-tag system that THE GAMES MACHINE said 'leads in terms of dramatic effect'. Normally £80, it features two guns, two helmets with chest sensors and webbing, a target and two ammo belts – all you add is batteries and a perfect aim!

And for **45 runners-up** there are copies of the games (normally £7.99 each) and A4 MASK ring binders (normally £2.50 each).


A
B
START
FINISH

RUN IT AGAIN!



Run it again and again and again – there's nothing like a good race game. You can always beat that world record just once more, as DOMINIC HANDY and MIKE DUNN discover when they go into . . .



MORE WHEELS THAN ISAIAH!

BMX Simulator
Endurance
Enduro Racer
Glider Rider
Knight Rider
Miami Vice
Milk Race
Nightmare Rally
Paperboy
Pole Position
Scalextric
Speed King II
Street Hawk
Super Cycle
TT Racer
Turbo Esprit

ENDURO RACER
Activision

92% Issue 40

MIKE ■ *Enduro Racer* is a direct conversion from the Sega coin-op machine which caused something of a stir in the arcades. In the seat of a powerful off-road motorbike, you have to get around five tracks in a rather limited time. The screen display is reminiscent of *Full Throttle*: you can see the bike and the track in front of it. The graphics are excellent, too. Fast and exciting, *Enduro Racer* is the best race game around and it's . . .
THE CHAMPION **94%**

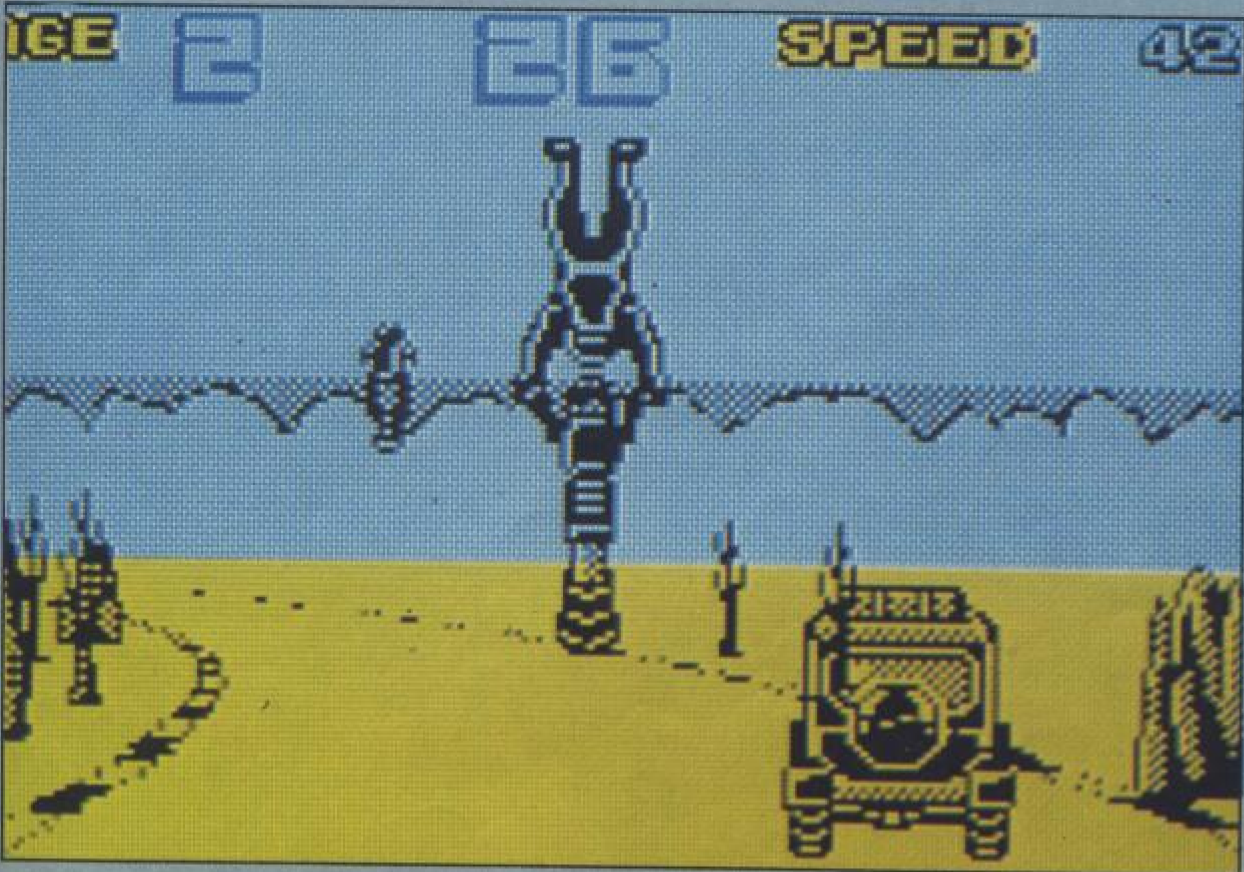
DOMINIC ■ Activision's cover Smash still seems great – because there's nothing like it. The jerky graphics show their age a bit, but the detailed ups and downs create a realistic enough feeling. I can still feel all the bumps and potholes after all those months.
87%

BMX SIMULATOR
Code Masters

63% Issue 37

MIKE ■ Take to the saddle of your BMX in *BMX Simulator*, the creation of well-known programmer and software publisher Richard Darling. It's a simple game, not requiring any real thought on the player's part – you just have to get around the course without hitting an assortment of planks, tyres and oil cans. But it's not the most mentally stimulating game ever, or especially addictive either!
39%

DOMINIC ■ The graphics may be fairly attractive, but there's no hiding the lack of actual gameplay. Simple stuff at a simple price.
39%



ENDURANCE
CRL

69% Issue 24

MIKE ■ This management game puts you in charge of two bikes and four riders in a Formula One motorcycle race. You set variables which affect your performance in the race: your chassis, bike specification, and engine tuning. Bike handling is then altered to set the speed, safety and wear; going short on any of these has its consequences! *Endurance* is an enjoyable game, remarkably addictive despite terrible graphics and annoying sound.
57%

DOMINIC ■ Mediocrity and simplicity at its lowest limits. *Football Manager* on the track? No thanks! There's too much strategy and not enough presentation.
30%

GLIDER RIDER
Quicksilva

80% (128 version 92%) Issue 34

MIKE ■ The first 128 game with any sort of enhancement, *Glider Rider* is made much more atmospheric by music. Trying to knock out the reactors which power some black-market arms dealers, you use your motorbike – which when zooming down hills and suddenly reversing direction becomes a hang glider, conveniently enough! The graphics are good, despite the awful scrolling and screen flicking, and *Glider Rider* is fairly playable and addictive.

76% (81%)

DOMINIC ■ The idea behind *Glider Rider* is very good, but the control method ruins the game. Still, the presentation is great – graphics, sound and options are all top-notch. And then there's that superb Dave Whittaker 128K soundtrack.

70%



KNIGHT RIDER
Ocean

39% Issue 33

MIKE ■ Haven't you ever wanted to become Michael Knight? I know I haven't, though his car always looks pretty decent. Pity about the game, though. Ocean's very long-awaited tie-in with the TV programme puts you in control of the mighty vehicle and gives you the task of stopping the evil terrorists who are trying to start World War III. Poor graphics accentuate a distinct lack of playability in this insipid shoot-'em-up.

19%

DOMINIC ■ I think the less I say about this the more Ocean will like the comment. If you're going to make people wait for a hyped game, you'd better make sure it's better than just 'average'.

28%

MILK RACE
Mastertronic

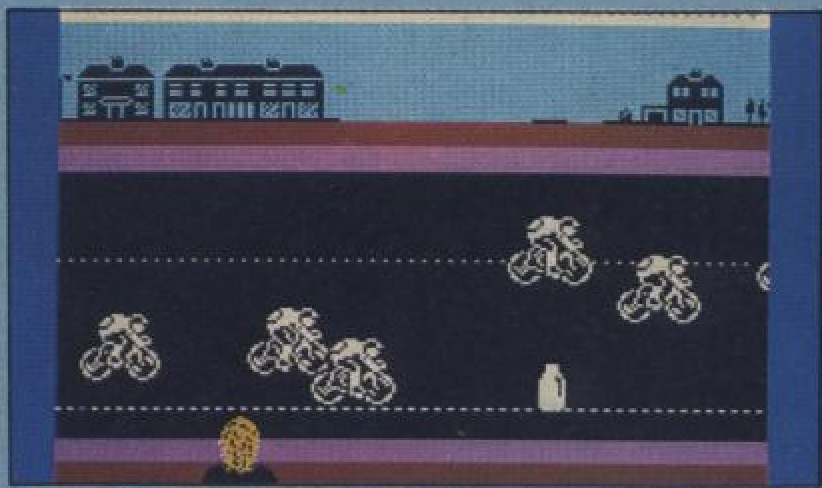
41% Issue 42

MIKE ■ Take to the saddle of your trusty Peugeot in this 13-stage simulation of the thousand-mile race from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to London. It's a very simple game; collect bottles of milk to keep your energy up, synchronise your gear with the incline of the road, avoid the other riders and you're home and dry. The graphics are basic and jerky, and the addictivity very low.

33%

DOMINIC ■ A nice idea, but launched too late for big sales, and lacking many aspects of the 'real' Milk Race. There's a superb little tune, but it's an infuriating game.

36%



STREET HAWK
Ocean

68% Issue 34

MIKE ■ Cruise along the streets in your mean machine, killing baddies . . . Ocean's *Street Hawk* lasted me a few minutes on replay. The graphics are dull, apart from the shoot-out screen, and the game's appeal soon fades.

40%

DOMINIC ■ There were a few versions of this flying about before we got the final one (mostly for impatient mail-order houses) – but the mass-produced one is much the best. Shading is great and the perspective works well. Worth a look for old times' sake.

56%

SUPER CYCLE
US Gold

63% Issue 37

MIKE ■ Another bike racer in the oh-so-popular vein: zoom round the course ASAP, and avoid the other riders. Not difficult. Unfortunately, US Gold made this far too easy to play, because there's simply no challenge in the first few levels; it's even possible to wrap around the sides of the screen when you corner!

48%

DOMINIC ■ What a failure this turned out to be. Second time round it doesn't seem so bad, though – mainly because the hype has died down, and everyone's forgotten about the excellent Commodore version. Bouts of boredom creep in rather too regularly, and because it's still at such a high price *Super Cycle* doesn't look too good against the budget competition.

47%

POLE POSITION
Atarisoft

68% Issue 12

MIKE ■ I suppose it deserves credit for being the original and all that, but the 68% rating *was* given three years ago, and I'm afraid *Pole Position* has aged quite seriously since then. One of the poorer racing games.

41%

DOMINIC ■ I waited ages for this conversion to come on the Spectrum – and they did a reasonable job. The graphics may not be as good as in *Out Run*, for instance, but the feel of the game is definitely *Pole Position*. It's dropped tremendously in price, and is unchallenged in its class (at the moment!).

71%

NIGHTMARE RALLY
Ocean

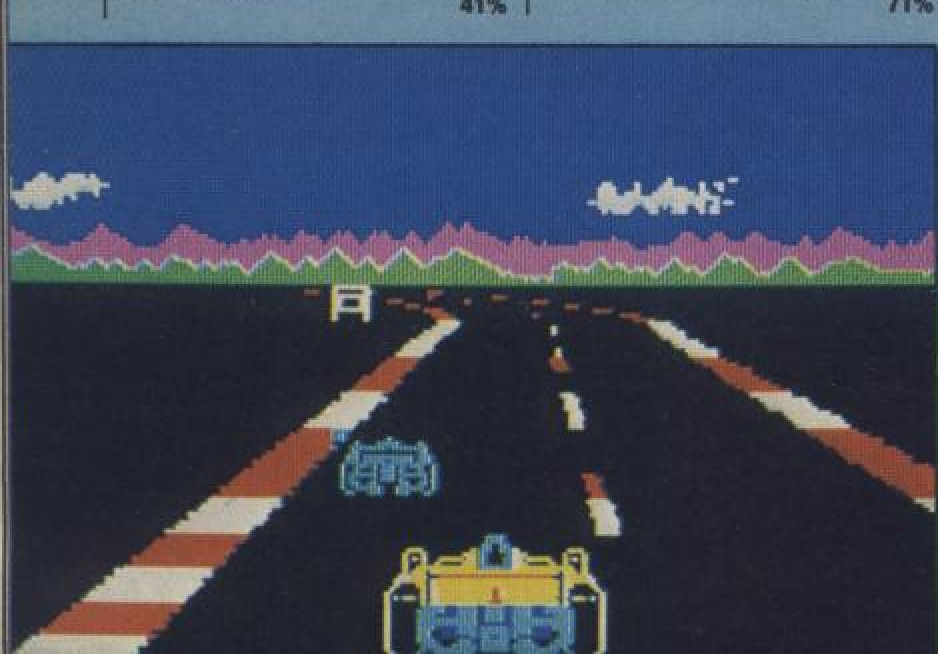
80% Issue 34

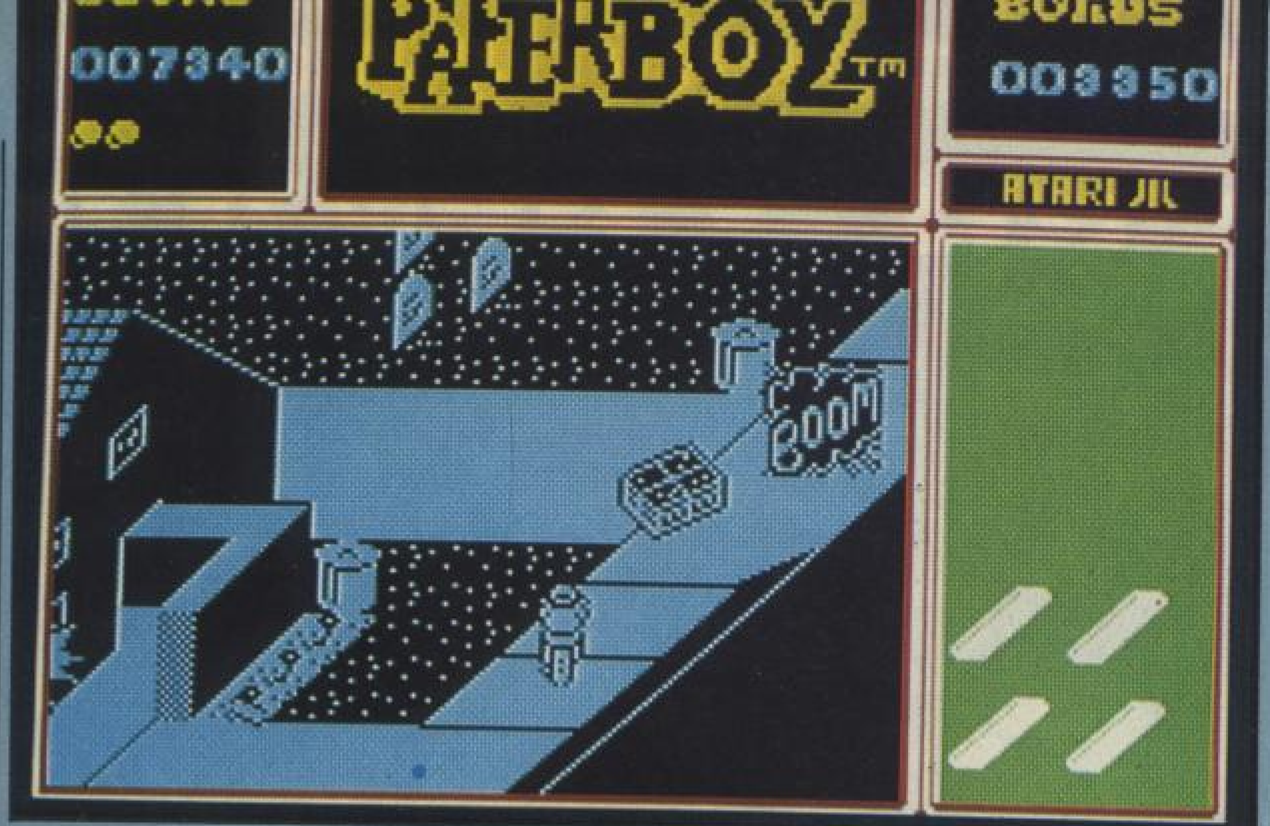
MIKE ■ Despite the cover depicting a Lamborghini and the game offering an Escort, *Nightmare Rally* is pretty good fun for the genre. It's basically a case of belting to the end of the course as quickly as possible. You can't get much more simple than that, can you? There are pretty graphics and loads of playability, so it's worth checking out.

71%

DOMINIC ■ I'm still impressed with this rallysprint clone – there's nothing like it. The graphics are very good, and the car is a sharp representation of a Ford Escort. Animation is also clear, adding to a very enjoyable and playable game.

85%





PAPERBOY
Elite

88% Issue 33

MIKE ■ Hot from the arcades, *Paperboy* landed on our doorstep in late 86: a wicked little game, making the eponymous player avoid all the evil objects thrown in his path on the quest to deliver papers to the houses in a street. It's playable (and quite fast), and offers a good deal of addictivity. A neat conversion from an even better arcade original.

89%

DOMINIC ■ One of Elite's best-ever arcade conversions. Smash those windows, run over annoying kids and knock the lids off dustbins, all in the comfort of your own home.

90%

TURBO ESPRIT
Durell

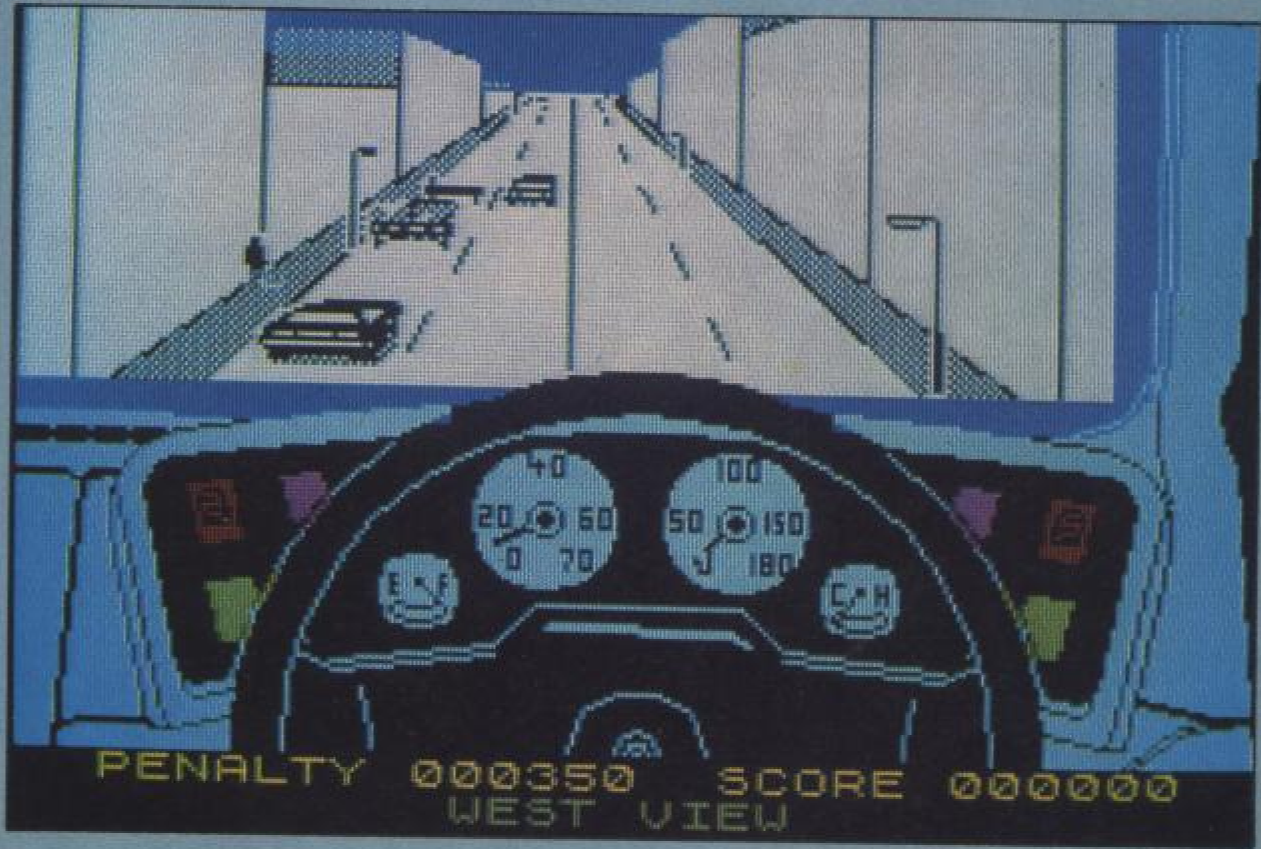
88% Issue 28

MIKE ■ In *Turbo Esprit*, you get a view out of your car window onto the road directly in front of you; your task is to crush the drug barons who are corrupting the city's young. Take on the world *Miami Vice* style (ie big fast posy car) in this fabulously detailed, enjoyable car game.

71%

DOMINIC ■ When *Turbo Esprit* hit the streets it turned more than a few heads – it turned out to be how Ocean's *Miami Vice* should have been. The street scenes are so innovative and accurate that most people forgot about the object of the game and just cruised the streets doing three-point turns and smashing into roadworks. Hardly dated at all. All you drivers pop out and buy a copy now!

THE CHAMPION **91%**



SCALEXTRIC
Leisure Genius

57% Issue 38

MIKE ■ The Scalextric toy racing set has almost become a necessary part of growing up, and Leisure Genius brings it right up to the computer age with their Spectrum version. A two-player *Chequered Flag* variant with a construction kit for good measure, *Scalextric* isn't bad, technically, but short on gameplay.

49%

DOMINIC ■ Almost the best racetrack game around. The construction kit ties in well with the title subject, and also makes the game lots of fun to play. And the two-player option adds to the value.

70%

SPEED KING II
Mastertronic

42% Issue 36

MIKE ■ Take the corners, avoid the other riders, go as fast as possible, and you've cracked the game – not what one might describe as the best race game ever. Poor graphics and an almost total lack of playability make it worse than any other racing game I can think of.

09%

DOMINIC ■ Along the same lines as *Full Throttle*, only everything's worse than in Micromega's classic original. *Full Throttle* is also at budget price, so I'd give this one a miss.

37%

TT RACER
Digital Integration

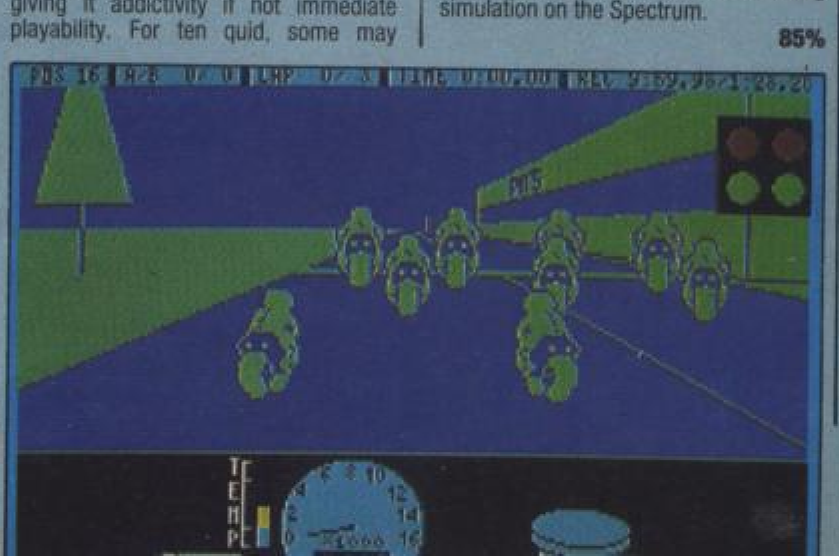
78% Issue 34

MIKE ■ A race game with all the complexity of a flight simulator? A daunting prospect, or at least *I* thought so! However, *TT Racer* has the content which is lacking in so many games of this genre, giving it addictivity if not immediate playability. For ten quid, some may expect rather more fun, but I'm fairly happy with it.

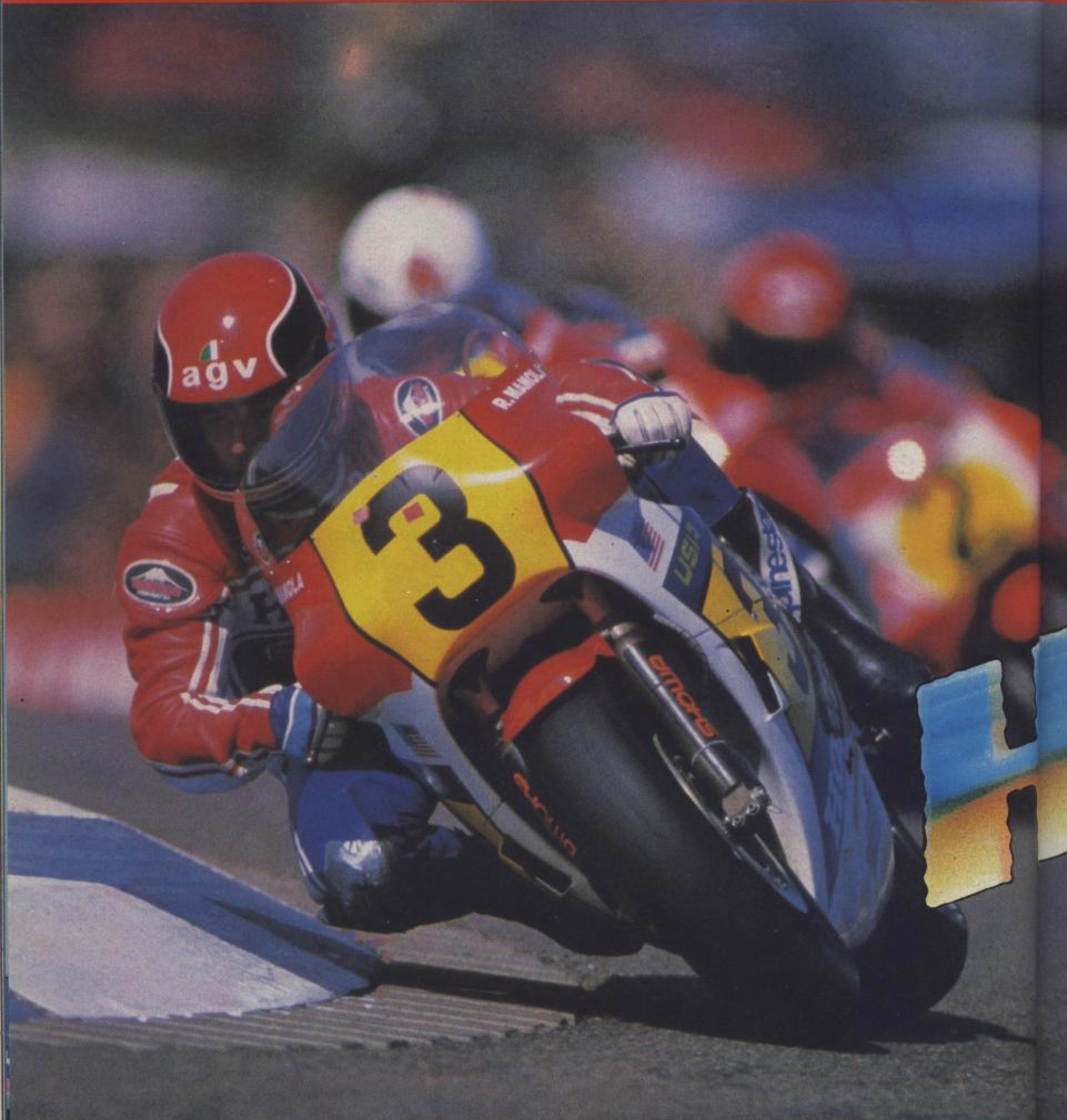
67%

DOMINIC ■ This has to be the most accurate biking simulation around today. When it first came out I wasn't too impressed, but after many, many more games the true simulation characteristics become apparent and the game more addictive. Most programmers would do well to look at the comprehensive options screen, as this makes the full price well worth paying. The best track-biking simulation on the Spectrum.

85%



"...the best racing played — even be



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TECH NICHE



IT'S CZ WHEN YOU KNOW HOW

JON BATES sits down to a sandwich, a glass of milk and your musical questions – plus a loony tune for the 128

THE MOTEL is kinda quiet at this time of year, with only a few stuffed birds for company; there's just enough breathing space, dear reader, to answer your missives and print up a 128K-Spectrum tune before some more guests arrive.

Back in June **Mark Roberts** sent in a mighty tome (actually addressed to Simon N Goodwin, who strapped it to his pet budgie and sent it flying through my window) all about the MIDI codes for the Casio CZ synthesizer series and 128K Spectrums. I covered this in brief in Issue 30 and right now I'm going through the lengthy process of verifying Mark's info. Eventually – probably in Issue 49 – we'll reveal all in a CZ special with all the other bits and bobs that go to make a Spectrum and CZ happy.

But if you can't wait, pop me an SAE at the CRASH address which is plastered all over the magazine (it's on the contents page, anyway) and I'll bung you an advance photocopy of the codes free of charge – it really is very comprehensive.

FB01 AND CHEETAH MK5

Jason Porter from Rotherham wants to know if the Yamaha FB01 tone generator will connect to the Cheetah MK5 keyboard, and whether you can play all eight notes and change all the voices from the Spectrum. Yes, you can play all eight notes but only if you set the receive channels on the FB01 to the same number, because the MK5 will only transmit on one channel at a time.

You can change the voices directly from the keyboard without plugging in the Spectrum, but if you want to have it as part of a set-up using, say, Cheetah's MIDI Sequencer, you could get it to remember patch changes on playback.

Watch this space for a review of Cheetah's new keyboards (that is, when we can can lay our sticky mitts on them) – though whether the FB01 is better than a DX100 or CZ101 will depend on you.

SPECDRUM AND INTERFACE

Bill Masters from Stockton-On-Tees writes in with the old bogey question: 'Can I synchronise my SpecDrum to a MIDI interface?' Bill, it seems, had written to the designer of Cheetah's MIDI interface, who came up with an idea which I won't go into because it didn't work!

The immediate answer is 'no' – the SpecDrum uses a peculiar pulse rate of one pulse per beat and it is an analogue trigger, whereas MIDI uses a digital timing code with the number of beats in it sent every 150 milliseconds.

But Simon N Goodwin woke up at three one morning with a mad brain wave that does work. It is a bit complex, though. It requires you to first of all listen to the actual SpecDrum pulse by shoving it through an audio system. So in your MIDI setup you set one synth or voice on a separate channel to be plugged into the SpecDrum sync (the mic input).

Now you have to program this synth to reproduce the exact pitch, sound and attack of the pulse code. This synth is assigned to a separate MIDI channel and does nothing but repeat the pulse every beat. By fiddling around with volume levels you should be able to get the SpecDrum firing up in sync – but no promises!

SPECDRUM FANZINE

J Robinson and **M Ulrich** (sounds very formal) are setting up a music fanzine for SpecDrum owners. They're on the lookout for programmers, electronic enthusiasts, article writers and tipsters. The scope of the (as yet unnamed) fanzine will be all known interfaces and software, MIDI, sampling, and general music info. If you fancy your chances contact Messrs Robinson and Ulrich at *Croft House, 34 Kingston Road, Romford, Essex RM1 3NB* or ring (0708) 49148. No doubt it'll be Fanzine Filed in time.

GOOD FOUR-TRACK GUIDE

Richard Lee from Glasgow wants advice on four-track cassette machines and he's not the only one. There are several types to choose from, and they start at about £200. I don't want to get too deep into their relative merits, but with a really limited budget the cheapest bet is going to be a second-hand Fostex X15, basic but serviceable.

If you want to do some research look at magazines like *Home And Studio Recording, Sound On Sound, Music Technology*, and *Music Now*, a freesheet with a good second-hand guide. Quite a few city high-tech music shops deal with second-hand four-trackers – get friendly with them.

That's all for now. Don't forget the Christmas Special – there's a silly tune in it to play around with while you flick peanuts at the screen on Christmas Day, and a (semi)musical comp. Must go, mother's anxious!

TECH TUNE DEPT

WE ARE FLATTERED to have our very own custom Tech Niche tune from **Jason Cruickshanks** of Arbroath. Jason has threatened us with a machine-code program next month. (Next month? Where are you, Jason? We've had this one for ages.)

He explains: 'I've sent this program for all the music-lovers of the 128K +2. It's got drums, chords and a sort of funny guitar. The program is quite simple; line 13 makes a sort of a bang, which fades – pretty easy to change. Line 90 is the introduction, and you can change that to suit your own needs too! Line 100 is the drums, chords and that funny guitar all rolled into one. You can also change this to suit your own needs.'

```
1 REM music tune for +2
2 REM by Jason November 1987
3 REM for Tech Niche
9 BORDER O:PAPER 0:INK 5:CLS
10 PRINT AT 0,10; "Music Tune"
11 PRINT AT 2,4; INK 2; "By J Cruickshanks"
12 PRINT AT 4,8; "For Tech Niche"
13 PRINT AT 10,6; "Press ENTER to play"
14 PAUSE 15: PLAY "M24 UW7X000U7d",
  "U7A","U1A","U7a"
15 IF  INKEY$ = ""  THEN  GOTO 15:  IF
  INKEY$ = CHR$ 13 THEN GOTO 100
89 PAUSE 30
90 PLAY    "M7UW7X4000U2dDaDADEAd
  fedfe&dfedfe&(Cc)&":PRINT AT 21,0;INK 7;
  PAPER; "NOW PLAYING!"
100 PLAY    "M7UW7X4000U2dDaDADEAd
  fedfe&dedfe&(cC))",
  "U2dddDDDDDDD&DD",
  "U2dDdDaAaaaaaFFF&AAADFDaD&&)",
  "M21UW7X3000UdDdDaAaaaaFFFAAADFDa
  DDddFgGaaa"
```

Not too bad! I'll print up any more tunes you care to send in. Send a print-out to save my fingers and brain, and the program on tape so it can be checked out. Now get coding.

TECH TIPS



Boost your Spectrum's RAM and get that +2 printer working with SIMON N GOODWIN

SENDING +2 PRINTER CONTROLS

THE +2 is hard to use with a modern serial printer because the ROM filters out control characters sent through the serial port. This stops you controlling special features of the printer like underlining, bold type, subscripts, graphics and so on. But you can get round the fault.

The problem is that the serial port is normally set up as a text channel. Every character printed from the computer (with LPRINT or LLIST, for instance) has a numeric code between 0 and 255. There's a list of these codes, and their meanings, at the back of the +2 manual.

Code values between 32 to 127 correspond to normal characters: spaces, digits, letters and punctuation. The Spectrum, unlike earlier Sinclair computers, uses the standard ASCII (American Standard Code For Information Interchange) correspondence for those characters, so they normally appear the same on a printer as they do on the screen.

However, the Spectrum uses the other codes – 0 to 31, and 128 to 255 – to represent graphics, colour controls, and the 48K BASIC keywords, each of which has its own shorthand code between 165 and 255. These codes will have different meanings to a printer. Some will be ignored: others will control the special features of that printer.

HOW CODES ARE LOST

The +2 checks the code of every character it prints. If it's a keyword, it is expanded into the letters of that word. Other control codes – apart from CHR$(13), the end-of-line marker – are ignored. They never get as far as the printer.

Most printers are designed to be controlled by characters that the +2 won't transmit. For instance, many control sequences start with CHR$(27), the code for 'escape'.

Stephen Mayne and **Stuart Knott** win this month's £30 software prize for revealing a couple of POKEs that turn off the 128's character-code checking, enabling you to LPRINT any code without interference.

To stop the normal checks, type:

POKE 23349,39: POKE 23350,1

To turn the checks back on, so that LLIST prints keywords correctly, you must enter:

POKE 23349,36: POKE 23350,1

This information should help anyone struggling to get graphics out of the cheap serial printers sold in large numbers with 128s last Christmas.

8056 GRAPHICS

Now that control codes can be sent from the +2 it should be possible to dump Spectrum SCREEN$ to the 8056 with a short program – COPY probably won't work, unless it happens to use the same codes.

You can send a graphic image eight dots deep and 256 dots wide to the 8056 by LPRINTing

CHR$(27);CHR$(75);
CHR$(0);CHR$(1)

followed by 256 bytes, where the binary values of the bytes indicate the pattern of successive columns of eight dots.

Each image could correspond to a character-line from the Spectrum screen, so 24 images would be enough for a complete screen dump.

The 256 data values for each line are easy to work out. For instance, the data value 170 would give a column of four alternating dots, because 170 is 10101010 in binary. To print a similar pattern one line lower, print CHR$(85) instead.

Of course, you'll need to use the POKEs mentioned above to stop the Spectrum intercepting some values.

Please write in – with demonstration dumps – if you manage to write a concise machine-code COPY routine using this information, and the details will be printed so lesser programmers can get their screens on paper.

GET MORE RAM WITH A MULTIFACE ONE

PAUL COOK has been following the recent correspondence about putting RAM into the bottom 16K of the Spectrum memory map, and has worked out how to adapt a Multiface One to provide 16K of shadow RAM. This is useful because it means you can replace the Spectrum's ROM with your own code, and make simple alterations to improve the performance of ZX BASIC.

In Issue 41, Tech Tips explained how you can copy part of the ROM into the 8K memory in Datel's Snapshot 2 gadget and tamper with ZX BASIC there to increase the speed of LOAD and SAVE. This is not normally possible with a Multiface, because the Multiface 8K RAM fits into the top half of the 16K ROM area and the tape routines are in the first part of the ROM.

Paul suggests a very simple modification, which only involves adding one chip and one wire to the Multiface. But it stops the Multiface One working normally and breaks the guarantee – so I wouldn't recommend this project to anyone who relies on the Multiface One to load and save software. It also requires a bit of soldering.

fold up pin 27 – the second from the top on the right-hand side, if you look at the chip so the notch is in the uppermost end – and connect it to the same pin of the 6264 chip which is already on the board.

Paul's program to copy the Spectrum ROM into Multiface RAM is printed here; I've added a couple of instructions that weren't in his code or the corresponding Snapshot 2 routine. These make sure that interrupts are disabled while the RAM is loaded – without this precaution there is a small chance that the computer will try to execute code in the RAM before anything has been copied there.

You switch on the Multiface memory – ROM or RAM – by reading a value from port 159:

LET X=IN 159

To return to the Spectrum ROM, read port 31:

LET X=IN 31

You can carry on using the Multiface if you save the contents of the ROM (from 0 to 8191, with the Multiface turned on) on tape or disk and load it into the new RAM when you need it. This is not as convenient as using the ROM, but it's less hassle than swapping chips.

```
100 REM Multiface 16K loader
110 REM CRASH December 1987
120 CLEAR 29999: FOR N=23296 TO 23322
130 READ A: POKE N,A :NEXT N
140 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
150 DATA 33,0,0,17,48,117,1,0,64,237
160 DATA 176,243,219,159,33,48,117,17
170 DATA 0,0,1,0,64,237,176,251,201
```

► **Paul Cook's routine copies 16K of Spectrum ROM into the Multiface One, freeing Spectrum memory**

CHANGING CHIPS

Normally the Multiface contains 8K of ROM, and 8K of RAM in a 6264 chip. Paul unplugged the ROM and replaced it with a second 6264 RAM. You can't just swap the chips over, because the RAM chip needs a write signal which the ROM socket does not provide. So

Paul performed this hack on a Mark 2 Multiface, and it should work on other versions – including the Multiprint – as well. But Tech Tips hasn't tested that, and Romantic Robot may have changed the design at some stage, so don't attempt this modification unless you're sure you can identify the right parts in your interface and put things back as they were if need be!



A NEW DISCIPLE

► The Disciple: a Spectrum disk system still developing despite the +3

THE +3 must be denting sales of Rockfort Products's Disciple, a drive-plus-interface combination that sells at the same price as the complete disk Spectrum. But the Disciple was demonstrated at The *PCW* Show in its new, debugged Version 3-B incarnation.

Among other tricks, this allows several networked Spectrums to share a 780K disk drive, saves 128K games to disk at the press of a button, and works about twice as fast as the Amstrad drive.

There are rumours that Kempston will soon produce a cut-down, cut-price version of the Disciple – watch this space!





► BASH IT AGAIN, SAM

The most expensive new Spectrum peripheral is Cheetah's DP5 drum kit, launched at The *PCW* Show. It's a steel-framed kit of five octagonal 'syn-drums' – pads which you can hit to trigger drum sounds from any drum machine. The obvious partner is the Cheetah SpecDrum synthesizer, which has sold in tens of thousands over the last couple of years.

The DP5 at the show was hooked up to a Spectrum +2 and a hefty amplifier (more news on how the Spectrum end works next issue.)

It gave a resounding demonstration of two things: the quality of the SpecDrum sound, and the solidity of the kit. At £160 it's not a cheap Spectrum add-on, but it's a very cheap drum kit.

The only snag, for professional drummers, is the lack of pressure-sensing; each drum sounds at a single, fixed volume when you hit the pad. Of course, this hardly matters if you always hit things as hard as possible!

THE WRITER WRITES

RECENTLY I've received a lot of letters containing tips that have already been printed in this column. Please check through back issues of CRASH before spending a lot of time reinventing the wheel!

There's still £30 worth of software going for original ideas that fit into the Tech Tips format (simple, reliable, effective!).

The address is, as ever: Simon N Goodwin, Tech Tips, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.*


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We could go on about the handsome tooling, the embossed title page and the rare art prints which will make this a collector's edition, but it'd all be fibbing. The CRASH binder is, however, very useful for making shelves collapse when overloaded with 164-page editions of the magazine!

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Franco Frey's First Law Of The Impermeability Of Materials states that a specially-designed double-seamed dust cover will, when placed over a Spectrum, inhibit its tendency toward dust equilibrium with its environment. In other words, these jobs keep your computer clean, right?

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And seriously, now, remember this small investment COULD save you big repair bills . . .

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CRASH HISTORY BINDERS

Lloyd Mangram's four-part CRASH History, which continues in this issue, will add up to 96 pages: 48 CRASH covers and 48 pages of text. A special binder will be available in December to keep the CRASH History permanently together.

The binder is designed to also accomodate the complete CRASH indexes to reviews, tips and features, which will be published in the Christmas Special.

And each binder will come with reprints of all Lloyd Mangram's CRASH Lookbacks (excluding 1987, because that's in the Christmas Special anyway) and some special articles and archival material on the history of the Spectrum. With the CRASH History it will form a unique CRASH book of over 120 pages.

You can order the binder now, but please be prepared to wait longer than the usual 28 days!

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BACK NUMBERS

Don't miss out!

1984

3 APR Sinclair talks to CRASH • Stack Light Rifle • Run It Again: *Missile Command* games • CRASHtionnaire results • the earliest surviving back number!!
4 MAY *The Quill* analysed • the fabled ZX Microdrive appears • Run It Again: *Pengo* games • graphics utilities • Living Guide: boardgames, simulations, strategy, adventure • the second-earliest surviving back number!! *(that's enough early back numbers – Ed)*

1985

17 JUN Denton Designs • Sinclair Story 3 • Maps: *Knight Lore, Underwurlde* • Leonardo Graphics • Datel sound sampler • Artist: David Thorpe
18 JUL Gremlin Graphics profile • Artist: Bob Wakelin • Map: *Gyron Atrium*
19 AUG CRL profile • Oliposter • roundup of BASIC compilers • Artist: Rich Shenfield • Maps: *Dynamite Dan, Shadowfire*
20 SEP Electronic Pencil Company profile • Maps: *Alien 8, Dun Darach*
21 OCT Holografix profile • Holograms • Map: *Nodes Of Yesod* • Platinum Productions profile
22 NOV Fanzine File • Microdrive tips • Artist: Susan Rowe • Fantasy Gamebooks
23 DEC Melbourne House • Computer graphics • Artist: Dave Beeson
24 XMAS 1985/6 Artist: Oliver Frey • Gargoyle Games profile • Lloyd's Lookback • Hewson profile

1986

25 FEB Durell profile • Microsphere • FORTH and extensions to ZX BASIC
26 MAR St Bride's profile • Spectrum 128 • Micronet 800 • Multiface 1
27 APR Playing Tips supplement • Mel Croucher • Imagine profile • PBM convention
28 MAY Fanzines • Martech profile • Composite Video Interface • SpecDrum
29 JUN First PBM Mailbox • Homegrown software • Realtime profile • Maps: *Cylu, Sir Fred, Saboteur, Tantalus*
30 JUL Birth of a game • Laser Genius • Maps: *Tantalus, Movie*
31 AUG Software Projects • Word processing • Maps: *Pentagram, Heavy On The Magick*
32 SEP Programmer: Dave Perry • *GAC* • Maps: *Core, Ghosts 'n' Goblins, Bobby Bearing* • Echo Synthesizer
33 OCT Programmers: Jon Ritman, Costa Panayi • Maps: *Dan Dare, Cauldron II* • SpecDrumming
34 NOV Programmer: Don Priestley • Genesis Update • Maps: *Dynamite Dan II, Equinox, Universal Hero* • Music Machine
35 DEC Designer: Dan Malone • Computer Advertising • Maps: *Glider Rider, Thrust, Lightforce* • MIDI
36 XMAS 1986/87 Lloyd's Lookback • Spectrum Music • Maps: *Scooby Doo, Heartland, Druid*

1987

37 FEB John Richardson: Jetman • CRASH Reviewers revealed • *Match Day* Challenge • Maps: *Fairlight II, Firelord, Avenger, Dandy*
38 MAR Fanzines • Designer: Bernie Drummond • Maps: *Cobra, Impossaball, Uridium* • MIDI
39 APR Arcades update • The Z88 • Programmer: Steve Taylor • Maps: *Nosferatu, Double Take, Future Knight, Feud*
40 MAY Terminal Man returns • Playing Tips Supplement • Maps: *Short Circuit, Antiriad, Con-Quest, Into The Eagle's Nest, Sceptre Of Bagdad, Dragon's Lair II, Thrust II, Fat Worm Blows A Sparky, Tarzan, Aliens*
41 JUN Programmer: Mike Singleton • Industry today • Adventure Trail Supplement • Maps: *Saboteur II, Head Over Heels* • Multitrackers • 128 bugs
42 JUL 16-page *OINK!* pull-out • *Living Daylights* film FX • Programmer: Pete Cooke • Maps: *Auf Wiedersehen Monty, Hydrofool, Rasterscan*
43 AUG The +3 arrives • Run It Again runs the *Gauntlet* clones • Big trouble at *The Bug* • CRASHtionnaire results • CRL's *3D Gamemaker* • Maps: *Enduro Racer, Flash Gordon*
44 SEP Programmer: David Aubrey-Jones on *Mercenary* • The Sega Master System • Is homegrown software healthy? • Tech Tips: that Swift Disc • Forum: *Barbarian* backlash continues • The CRASH Challenge • Maps: *Vampire, The Curse Of Sherwood* • tips galore for *Killed Until Dead*
45 OCT Run It Again: the kick-'em-ups • The CRASH History Part One • In the arcades • The budget BOOOOOOM • How stars are born: selling your games • On The Screen logo winners • Maps: *Game Over, Wonder Boy*

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the CRASH CHARTS



TOP GAMES DECEMBER

The three charts compiled from the votes of CRASH readers are the most realistic way of gauging the popularity of Spectrum games – it is the games that are being played that get the votes, not the games that are in the shops this week or month.

And the votes are important. It's up to you to let us know what you feel, so fill in the voting forms which live on the results pages to make your voice heard.

If you don't want to carve up your issue of CRASH, we understand. Use a photocopy if you like, or copy the details from the voting forms onto a postcard, or the back of a sealed envelope, and send that to us instead.

Apart from the satisfaction of registering your vote, there's always the chance of winning a prize. Each month we draw 15 winners from all the voting forms received – five for the HOTLINE, five for the ADVENTURE and five for the STRATEGY chart.

A top prize of £40 worth of software (your choice, not ours) and a CRASH T-shirt is awarded to the first slip drawn from the HOTLINE votes, and another £40 of goodies and a shirt goes to the ADVENTURE and £40 of goodies and a shirt goes to the STRATEGY.

Four runners-up from each ballot box collect a CRASH T-shirt and a CRASH Hat. So get those votes in to the **CRASH HOTLINE CHART**, **CRASH ADVENTURE CHART** and **CRASH STRATEGY CHART**: ***PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***.

After an incredible eight months at Number One *Gauntlet* gets pushed off the top by *Enduro Racer*, the Activision top seller featured on Issue 40's cover. Looking further down we see four Smashing new entries: *Renegade*, *Mercenary*, *Bubble Bobble* and *Wizball*.

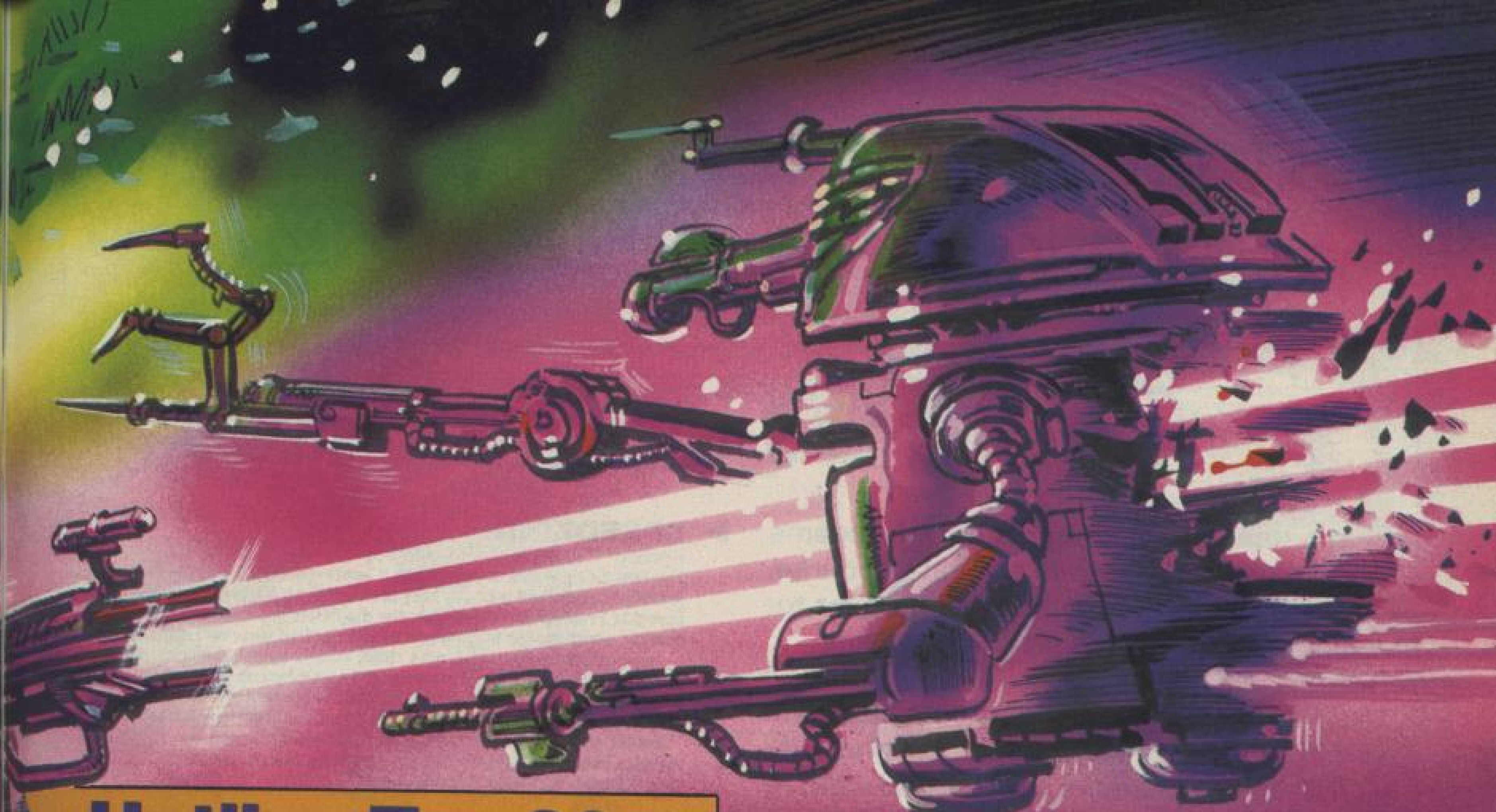
A medium-sized Welshman wins this month's big prize:* Graham Pugh *from Michaelston-Super-Ely (a little place with a big name) in Cardiff. His choice of compilations will be taking that familiar train from Ludlow to Newport . . . The runners-up are all medium-sized, too. They're* Chris Beck *from Rotherham in South Yorkshire,* Gareth Jenkins *from over Hadrian's Wall in Cumbernauld,* Barry Lloyd *from Chorley in Lancashire and* Martin Faulkner *from Little Snoring, no, sorry, Wokingham in Berkshire.

Strategy Top 10

1 *(1)*	**VULCAN**	CCS
2 *(3)*	**ARNHEM**	CCS
3 *(4)*	**DESERT RATS**	CCS
4 *(5)*	**THEATRE EUROPE**	PSS
5 *(2)*	**REBELSTAR RAIDERS**	FIREBIRD
6 *(-)*	**DOOMDARK'S REVENGE**	BEYOND
7 *(6)*	**LORDS OF MIDNIGHT**	BEYOND
8 *(8)*	**TOBRUK**	PSS
9 *(-)*	**GALLIPOLI**	CCS
10 *(-)*	**THEIR FINEST HOUR**	CENTURY HUTCHINSON

There haven't been many strategy releases this autumn, but this month's chart shows quite a range of companies and games. *Vulcan* holds on to the top spot, while three re-entries, *Their Finest Hour*, *Gallipoli* and *Doomdark's Revenge*, all try again.

Andrew Auckland *from Cleveland, or was that Andrew Cleveland from Auckland, was picked first out of the Strategy Tank this month. Runners-up are* Barry Lloyd *from Chorley in Lancashire,* Craig Shepherd *from Walthamstow in north London,* Lee Orchard *from just over the Thames in Tooting, and* John Cook *from boat-racing Cambridge.*



Hotline Top 20

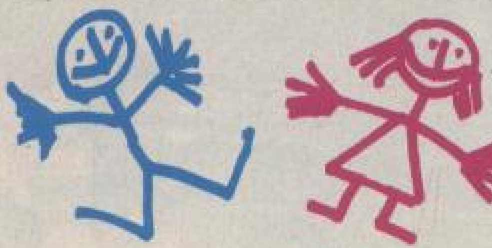
1 *(2)*	**ENDURO RACER**	ACTIVISION
2 *(6)*	**ZYNAPS**	HEWSON
3 *(1)*	**GAUNTLET**	US GOLD
4 *(3)*	**HEAD OVER HEELS**	OCEAN
5 *(5)*	**EXOLON**	HEWSON
6 *(11)*	**BARBARIAN**	PALACE
7 *(8)*	**URIDIUM**	HEWSON
8 *(14)*	**MATCHDAY**	OCEAN
9 *(12)*	**ELITE**	FIREBIRD
10 *(▶)*	**RENEGADE**	IMAGINE
11 *(▶)*	**MERCENARY**	NOVAGEN
12 *(▶)*	**BUBBLE BOBBLE**	FIREBIRD
13 *(10)*	**LEADERBOARD**	US GOLD
14 *(15)*	**STARGLIDER**	RAINBIRD
15 *(7)*	**COBRA**	OCEAN
16 *(17)*	**BATMAN**	OCEAN
17 *(4)*	**PAPERBOY**	ELITE
18 *(9)*	**ARKANOID**	IMAGINE
19 *(▶)*	**WIZBALL**	OCEAN
20 *(18)*	**LIGHTFORCE**	FTL

No new entries in the Adventure Chart this month, just re-entries from four oldies. The Top Ten looks pretty lively, though *The Hobbit* still holds strong at Number One after over four years on the Spectrum. Robin Candy's old favourite *Lords Of Midnight* creeps up to the Number Two spot. At the other end of the chart *The Pawn* makes little progress after last issue's ▶.

Andrew Cavaciuti *(sounds a bit Italian) from Blackwood in Gwent (sounds a bit Welsh) thinks* The Hobbit *is still tops in adventures, and he wins this month's £40 worth of software etc. Next out of the CRASH cap were* Steve Hutchinson *from the fair city of Doncaster in South Yorkshire,* M Venn *from Tadworth in Surrey,* Lee Ingham *from Leuchars in Fife and* Ian Warner *of Baldock, Hertfordshire.*

Adventure Top 20

1 *(1)*	**THE HOBBIT**	MELBOURNE HOUSE
2 *(8)*	**LORDS OF MIDNIGHT**	BEYOND
3 *(7)*	**THE BOGGIT**	CRL
4 *(3)*	**SPELLBOUND**	M.A.D.
5 *(4)*	**HEAVY ON THE MAGICK**	GARGOYLE GAMES
6 *(13)*	**DOOMDARK'S REVENGE**	BEYOND
7 *(5)*	**KNIGHT TYME**	M.A.D.
8 *(-)*	**BORED OF THE RINGS**	CRL
9 *(2)*	**STORMBRINGER**	M.A.D.
10 *(6)*	**LORD OF THE RINGS**	MELBOURNE HOUSE
11 *(11)*	**GREMLINS**	ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL
12 *(9)*	**THE PRICE OF MAGIK**	LEVEL 9
13 *(15)*	**THE BIG SLEAZE**	PIRANHA
14 *(14)*	**RED MOON**	LEVEL 9
15 *(-)*	**SHADOWFIRE**	BEYOND
16 *(18)*	**THE PAWN**	RAINBIRD
17 *(-)*	**FOURTH PROTOCOL**	CENTURY HUTCHINSON
18 *(17)*	**SHADOWS OF MORDOR**	MELBOURNE HSE
19 *(-)*	**DUN DARACH**	GARGOYLE GAMES
20 *(10)*	**FAIRLIGHT 2**	THE EDGE



Christmas Liste.

Ben and Dom,
Crash,
Ludow,
Shrops.

What's small and black and bursts the seams of a stocking? A Spectrum add-on, of course – there are hundreds of little black boxes for music, printing, screen art and program transfer.

DOMINIC HANDY suggests some utilities and hardware for the Christmas list, and BEN STONE brings joysticks to the world – but don't fight over them, or they'll all be broken by little black Boxing Day.

Joystickes

▶ TERMINATOR

Supersoft £19.95

Like most pointless street cred – fake Raybans, expensive earplugs on a Radio Shack personal stereo and the Beastie Boys – the Terminator *does* serve a purpose, but only just. And its wacky design takes a lot of getting used to.

Being so tiny the Danish stick has a lot of travel, so it's quite unresponsive. And the fire pin is difficult to use: you have to hold the grenade and fire with the same hand, but you can get it to work fairly quickly if you're prepared to go through hand-ache agony. The Terminator is all but indestructible, made of very thick plastic and durable electrical parts, but for nearly 20 quid I'd expect something a little more efficient than this.



▶ COMPETITION PRO 5000

Dynamics £14.95 (£15.95 with transparent case, Competition Pro Extra £16.49 with autofire and go-slow mode)

This is *the* joystick. The fire action is brilliant and the stick performs like a dream. It looks much the same as the Euromax Professional, but for just a pound more you can get it with high-tech clear casing (as in the picture).

It's durable, because the shaft is made of steel and the microswitched mechanism inside is remarkably simple (and pretty much user-serviceable). The fire buttons work with reed switches, sometimes considered unreliable, but I've never had any trouble.

Sadly, there's no autofire on either model, though there's a souped-up version on the market (the Competition Pro Extra) with autofire option and a go-slow mode never before seen on any joystick.



▶ SPEEDKING

Konix £11.99 (£12.99 with autofire)

The Speedking was a novelty when it appeared – the first truly hand-held joystick that worked well. It's easy to use, though it has the problem of the Euromax Professional in reverse: the diagonals are a pig to find and use quickly, which makes playing games like fighting sims very difficult.

The position of the fire button really makes your hand ache if you're pressing it a lot – shoot-'em-ups turn into a nightmare when you're doing well! – though it would be difficult to have it anywhere else on the compact little body of the Speedking. There is a Speedking with autofire available.

Earlier this year Konix claimed one Speedking lasted for 17,604,000 waggles (that's 27 days of nonstop waggling, folks!), but the story is not now believed, *Our Waggling Editor writes.*



▶ PROFESSIONAL

Euromax £15.95 (£18.95 with autofire)

The Euromax Professional has most of the features now becoming standard in the joystick world: posey design and microswitches, and an autofire option if you want to pay a bit extra. (It's the autofire version in the picture.)

At first it's a little difficult to get to grips with, literally, because it's biased slightly to the diagonals. Theoretically this means the joystick's eight directions are equally easy to use, but in practice the stick often slips out of the vertical/horizontal into a diagonal.

But the Euromax Professional has a brilliant fire action. And it's a great stick for games where deft, precise movements aren't needed; it feels rather flimsy, but the couple that were in the office had fairly long lives considering the hammering a CRASH joystick gets!



▶ 125 SPECIAL

Cheetah £12.99

This new joystick, introduced in last issue's *PCW* Show report, has the usual eight directional controls as well as two independent fire buttons – and a special rotate function which allows the player to twist the joystick for extra-realistic movement. Of course a joystick of such complexity needs more than the usual five pin in/outputs; you'll have to have an extra joystick port, or use both ports on the +2 and +3. There is an autofire function.

P.T.O.→

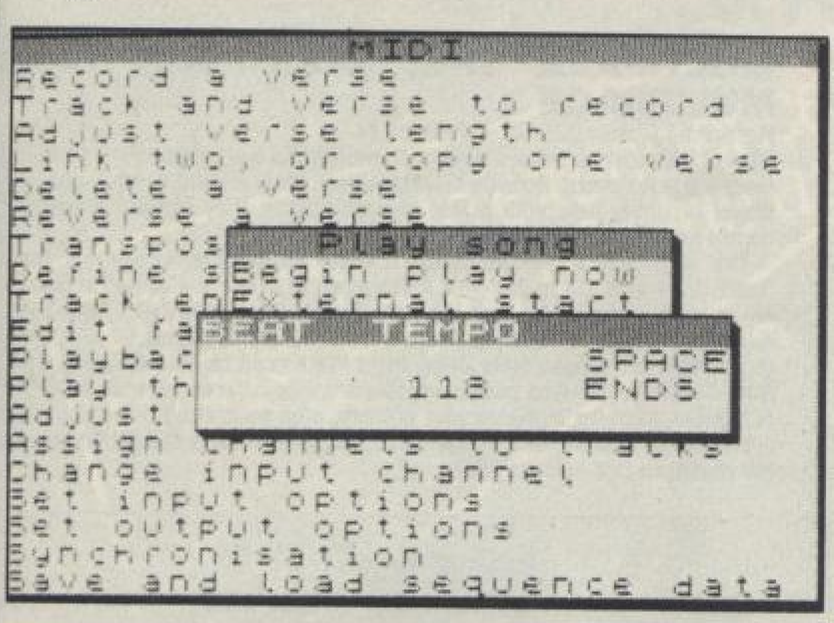

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in the bleak MIDI winter

▶ MIDI INTERFACE

Cheetah Marketing £49.95

With this interface box and accompanying software you can control any MIDI instrument via the Spectrum. It's superb for people who can write music but can't play – just enter the notes and the computer plays the instrument. Or do it the other way round: you play the music and the computer puts it into musical notation. Including a MIDI lead for connecting the interface to your instrument, the MIDI Interface was reviewed in Issue 40.



▶ MK5II KEYBOARD

Cheetah Marketing £199.95

This 61-key fully polyphonic board with foot switch and MIDI output ports comes packed in a rugged steel case. It's an ideal accessory to Cheetah's MIDI Interface.



▶ MUSIC MACHINE

Ram Electronics £49.95

'One of the best all round music add-ons for the Spectrum' – Jon Bates, Issue 34. A sound sampler, sequencer, editor, drum machine and composer all in one little black interface, the popular Music Machine is supported by a wide range of software. Recent additions include Quasar Software's *Sample Editor* (reviewed last issue) and Tectrics's chord construction kit *Compuchord* (Issue 45).





▶ SPECDRUM

Cheetah Marketing £29.95

Now the standard drum add-on for the Spectrum, the SpecDrum comes complete with eight samples of real drum sounds. Extra drum sounds can be loaded in from tape: the Electro Kit and Afro Kit both retail at £4.99 and the older Latin Kit at £3.99, and all come complete with their own editors. The SpecDrum plugs into most hi-fis via a connecting phono lead. Jon Bates enthused over it in Issue 27.

▶ *MUSIC TYPEWRITER*

Romantic Robot £7.95

Coming complete with keyboard overlays (48/+), this clever piece of software is a sophisticated tool for music on the Spectrum. Music written on *Music Typewriter* is displayed onscreen using realistic graphics which can be dumped to most dot-matrix printers, so you can print your own music.

And your compositions aren't limited to *Music Typewriter* – all your tunes can be converted to machine code for use in your own programs. Jon Bates went sharpening and flattening on *Music Typewriter* in Issue 16.

printing

▶ MULTIPRINT

Romantic Robot £39.95

A printer interface with all the options, the Multiprint can dump any Spectrum screen to an Epson-compatible printer in three different densities – it's handy for listings, too. There's more info in Issue 43.



▶ RAMPRINT

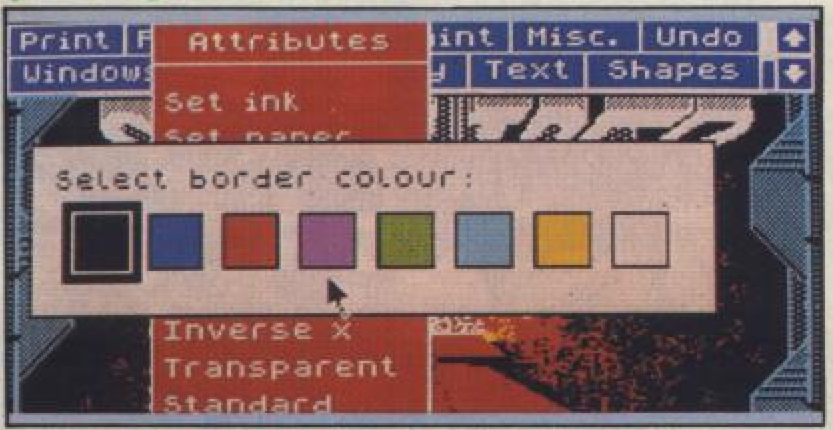
Ram Electronics £34.95

Not only does this little black box drive your printer using a very easy menu-driven system (all stored on a ROM chip), it's also useful for those après-Christmas 'thank you' letters because it comes with a built-in word processor, accessible from BASIC at any time and also on ROM.

And if you ever get bored of all those line feeds and ESCape codes you can always plug your joystick in the built-in Kempston port and bash away at a game. See the details in Issue 35.

P.T.O.→

for the artist



► *THE OCP ART STUDIO*
THE ADVANCED OCP ART STUDIO

Rainbird £14.95, £24.95

'Probably the best art utility on the Spectrum' – Mike Dunn (On The Screen Editor). Need we say more? Several versions of the mouse- and joystick-compatible *Art Studio* utility are available for different Spectrum setups; *The Advanced OCP Art Studio*, which really needs an Interface One and microdrive to use its full potential, is much more powerful than the original. It has a Scrapbook library facility so you can combine and paste together pictures. Issues 24 and 40 have reviews of *The OCP Art Studio* and *The Advanced OCP Art Studio* respectively.



VIDEO DIGITISER

Sunset £128.00

Ever wanted to change Prince Charles's ears, or rub out out that blot on Gorbachov's forehead? You can do this and more, provided you've a video recorder, with the Sunset Video Digitiser. This little black box has all the connections for grabbing TV pictures from the video and then using them anywhere you want – even in games. Sadly, there's no printer ribbon that will put them onto T-shirts. Franco Frey got frame-grabbing in Issue 31.

VIDEOFACE DIGITISER

Romantic Robot £69.00 plus £1.00 postage and packing

The Videoface Digitiser is amazingly cheap and fast – it's all here. You can grab and scan three pictures a second, and then produce a very realistic animation sequence using up to six screens. At about half the price of the Sunset Video Digitiser, this represents unbelievable value for money.

Not a creature is stirring, except for a mouse

KEMPSTON MOUSE

Kempston Data £49.95

There's no WIMPing out with Kempston's version of the yuppie controller, with button eyes and connecting tail. Don't forget to lock up your cheeseboard and keep the cats indoors. Kempston is still bundling Rainbird's *OCP Art Studio* with this rodent at £69.95. Or those with a Spectrum +3 you can get Kempston's new *Desktop* utility package for +3 DOS and the mouse for exactly the same price.

COMCON

Frel £17.95 (single port), £19.95 (twin port)

This is guaranteed to work with any product that uses the Spectrum keyboard. By connecting the six plugs to the miniature keyboard add-on you can have eight directions and TWO independent fire buttons (provided you have the correct joystick – also available from Frel). A twin-port version is also available for complex games. Lloyd reviewed the single-port version way back in Issue Eight.

And...

► MULTIFACE ONE, MULTIFACE 128, MULTIFACE 3

Romantic Robot £39.95, £44.95, £44.95

'One of the most versatile and user-friendly units on the market' – CRASH Issue 29 – Romantic Robot's Multifaces are ideal for the serious game-player or utility user with a fast storage device: they can put cassette games on Beta, Opus and Kempston disks.

The Multiface 3 (pictured) can transfer cassette programs for the Spectrum + and 128 to the +3's Amstrad disks. It was welcomed in Issue 45 as a good reason to buy the +3, though Sixword's Swift Disc and Rockfort Product's Disciple are also worthwhile disk systems.

The Multifaces have other uses: most POKEs can be entered using the ROM-based toolkit. And printer-owners are also catered for with a COPY command, ideal for dumping your greatest high scores! All these options are available at any time at the press of a little red button. CRASH first saw the Multiface One in Issue 26.



PLUS D

Miles Gordon Technology £49.95
(£129.95 with 3.5-inch 780K-capacity disk drive)

The Plus D is a new disk and printer interface from the designers of Rockfort Product's Disciple. Its Snapshot button will save all 48K and 128K cassette programs to disk, it's claimed, and the interface can make single and double-size screen dumps to a printer. The Plus D is also available in a package with a disk drive.

GAMMA-STRIKE

Gamesware £24.95

Gamesware's Gamma-Strike target-shooting system is a novel combination of hardware and software – you plug a target into the Spectrum, shoot at it with a model gun and watch the computer monitor your score! It's all done with the latest signal-detection techniques, and Gamesware promises more 'plug-in games' including darts and snooker soon . . . look out for the CRASH review.

Thank you Santa,
Lots of luv
Ben and
Dom
xxxxx



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YOGI BEAR

Producer: **Piranha**
Retail price: **£9.95**
Authors: **Dalali**

'Are you smarter than the average bear?' asks the publicity. Well, there are bears and there are bears. This time we're dealing with the necktie-and-hat-wearing variety who live in Jellystone Park and are known as Yogi to their friends.

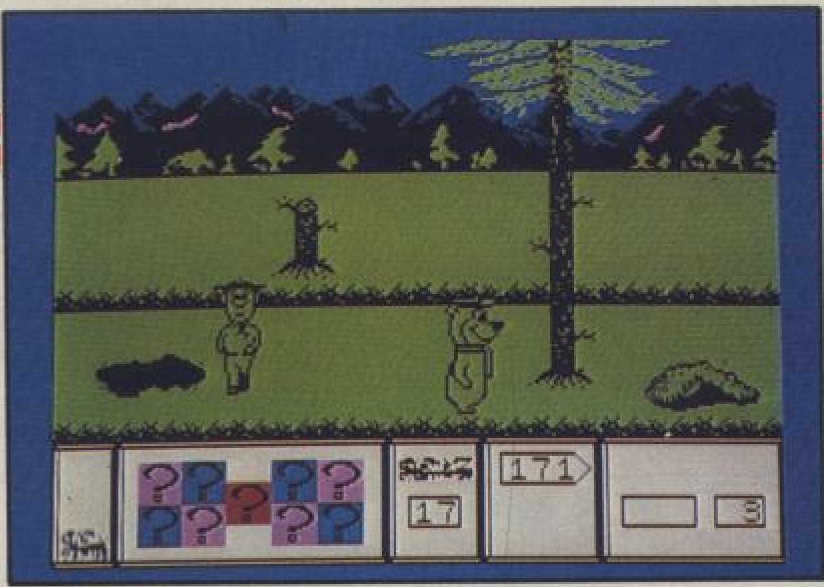
But Jellystone Park is not the safest place to live: furry little Boo Boo bear has been kidnapped, and Yogi has to rescue him before the bearlet starts wanting to hibernate.

And what with hunters, moose *(shurely Hunter's Moon? - Man Ed)*, vultures, hopping mad frogs, geysers and that mean old Ranger Smith, it's going to be an anxious time.

Yogi can jump over obstacles, or duck or dive his way around them, but touching an obstacle can delay even an above-average bear or send him back to square one. Yogi can travel more safely by going through caves – if he finds a cave entrance in the first place.

There are picnic hampers left conveniently lying around, and if Yogi starts shrinking on the screen you know he's getting very hungry. (He's certainly no subtler than the average bear.)

Toffee apples also lie on the ground, and when you pick one up, an icon box becomes coloured. Each of these icon boxes represents a stepping stone to Boo Boo's prison, and when Yogi has found all the toffee apples and reached the real stepping stones (don't stop reading, this is the dramatic bit) he has to take the right route over the stones, or risk being captured himself. And no-one wants to read in their morning paper about another botched hostage rescue attempt.



▶ Bear-faced greed

BYM

" Yogi Bear **has one of the most aggravating features any game could wish for: at the start of each of your six lives you're returned to the first screen, making progress a very time-consuming business! As for the rest, confusing graphics and the breathtaking speed at which Yogi runs make it all very difficult to manage . . . "**

67%

NICK

" Yogi Bear **isn't so bad if you can get into it, but getting started is the problem. In some of the later screens there's very well-drawn scenery, and the baddies get tougher and tougher, but** Yogi Bear **will have no lasting appeal; a tune at the beginning and more sound effects would help greatly. "**

62%

Piranha had some problems making a game of the popular Hanna-Barbera cartoon. For a start, the licence-holders insisted that the computer characters look exactly like the cartoon stars – not as easy as it sounds, when every detail must be double-checked!

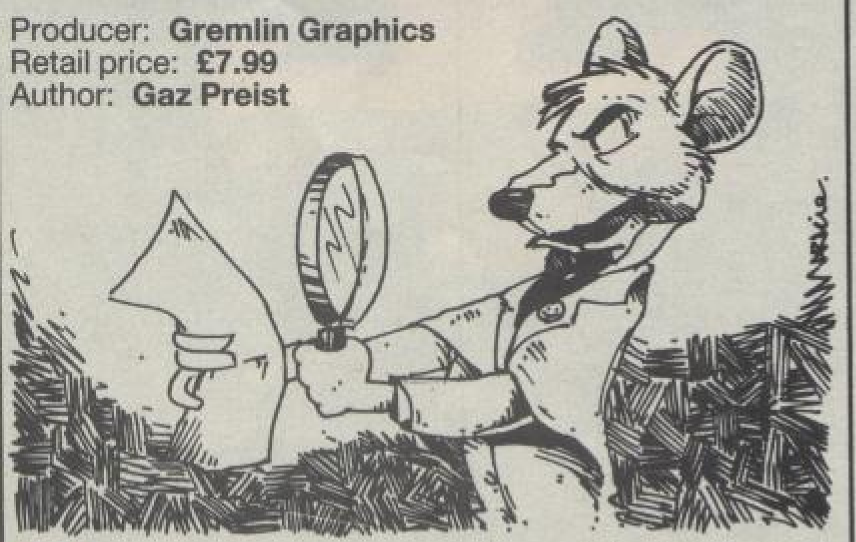
Yogi's proprietors were also anxious that his image as a fun-loving huggable bear shouldn't be damaged by the violence and truly nasty nasties of everyday Spectrum fare. (That's why it's technically *your* lives and not Yogi's that are lost!)

So bear in mind that the game is aimed at a young, impressionable audience (as is *Basil The Great Mouse Detective*).

Looking ahead, there's a *Yogi Bear* competition in the CRASH

BASIL THE GREAT MOUSE DETECTIVE

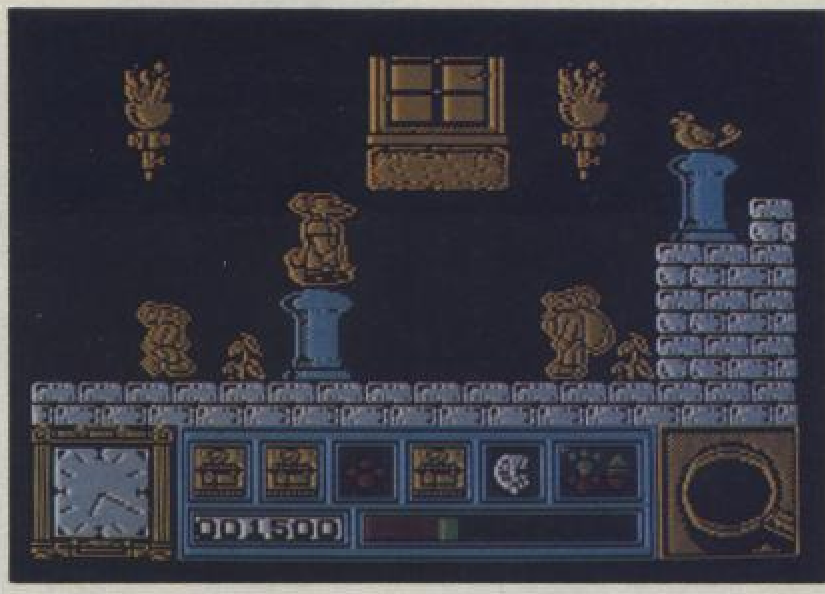
Producer: **Gremlin Graphics**
Retail price: **£7.99**
Author: **Gaz Preist**



Number 221B Baker Street is home to TWO great detectives. Upstairs with pipe, violin and Doctor Watson is Sherlock Holmes. Down in the basement is Basil, Mouse Detective. His mission is to find his friend, Doctor Dawson, kidnapped by the evil Professor Ratigan in this licence from the Walt Disney film.

Basil starts in one of London's seedy waterfront districts. By clambering through letter boxes, he can enter houses, to scuttle beneath, around and over furniture, climb short flights of stairs, clamber on top of crates and leap from shelf to shelf, earning points by completing a screen.

Jars, crates, sacks and carpetbags often conceal clues, such as a gun, a letter, locks and keys, which can be examined by our rodent hero. If a hidden object is revealed it appears in the great mouse's magnifying glass at the side of the screen, and if Basil considers the clue helpful enough he can pick it up and carry it. But not even a master mouse's pockets are bottomless.



▶ Say 'cheese'

And the cunning Ratigan has left eight false clues; Basil can't discover which are real and which aren't till he's filled five icon clue boxes.

Ratigan's henchmen are out to do the smart mouse down, too, though Basil can restore his vital get-up-and-go by nibbling at the pieces of cheese some friend of law and order has left lying around.

And he can collect mousetraps, dropping them in the pathway of his foes to pin them out of mischief.

Once Basil has gathered all he needs from the river area, he moves on to the sewers of Old

BYM

" **I doubt** Basil The Great Mouse Detective **will be very addictive, even if you can identify all the Walt Disney characters. And perhaps there are too many screens for very young players to manage – so who's it aimed at? "**

68%

Christmas Special – a chance to win lots of sweet food from Harrods (toffee apples not included, for technical reasons) plus copies of the game.

PAUL

" Yogi is a lovable old bear, but sadly the computer version of the eponymous cartoon animal is a lot less manageable than the 'average bear'. The main flaw is bad collision-detection; all the inhabitants of Jellystone Park are accurately and cartoonishly drawn, but this kind of 3-D is hard to manage. "

58%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: sparse landscape with adequate character reproduction
Sound: simple spot effects
General rating: a very hard game aimed at a very young market

Presentation	55%
Graphics	63%
Playability	51%
Addictive qualities	51%
OVERALL	**62%**

London town. If the tiny 'tec manages to battle his way through these subterranean darknesses he can at last confront Ratigan himself and rescue the rodent Dawson.

PAUL

" With all those Walt Disney films on Christmas TV this'll make the ideal present for any little child's stocking. The characters are very Walt Disneyesque, though the wiry graphics aren't as attractive as they could have been. It's also sad to hear such a bad title tune. Still, the concept of the game is appropriately simple for its young market – though that doesn't mean anyone will find it easy to complete. "

78%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: attractive, cartoony
Sound: poor title tune
General rating: a simple tie-in which Gremlin intends for the youngest players

Presentation	75%
Graphics	73%
Playability	68%
Addictive qualities	78%
OVERALL	**73%**

DEFLEKTOR



Producer: **Gremlin Graphics**
Retail price: **£7.99**
Authors: **Costa Panayi**

Laser beams can be funny things, especially in the world of the Deflektor.

Here the powerful light source is used to destroy energy blobs. But the direct routes to these packets of points are often obstructed by solid walls and blocks. To direct the beam around these and onto the blobs, a directing block can be moved about the screen.

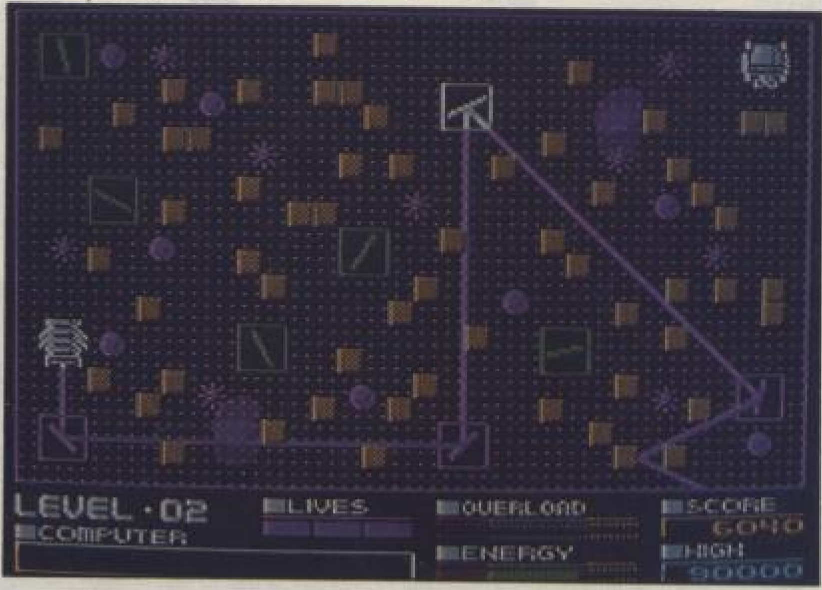
The angle of rotatable mirrors can be altered to transfer the beam to other mirrors and finally to the energy blobs themselves.

But nebulous gremlins are intent upon tinkering with the mirrors and thus throwing off course your carefully-directed beam. These mischievous creatures can be removed with your beam.

There are other dangers. If the laser crosses, or rebounds upon itself, a dangerous overload can be set up. And scattered mines can be detonated if they're in contact too long with the laser energy.

The laser beam's energy is reduced by frequent movement, but you'll have to remove all the energy blobs from a level to leave it. Then the laser must be directed onto another generator; when contact is made the next level appears with a fresh configuration of mirrors, bombs and energy blobs.

There's a *Deflektor* competition on page 96 of this CRASH.

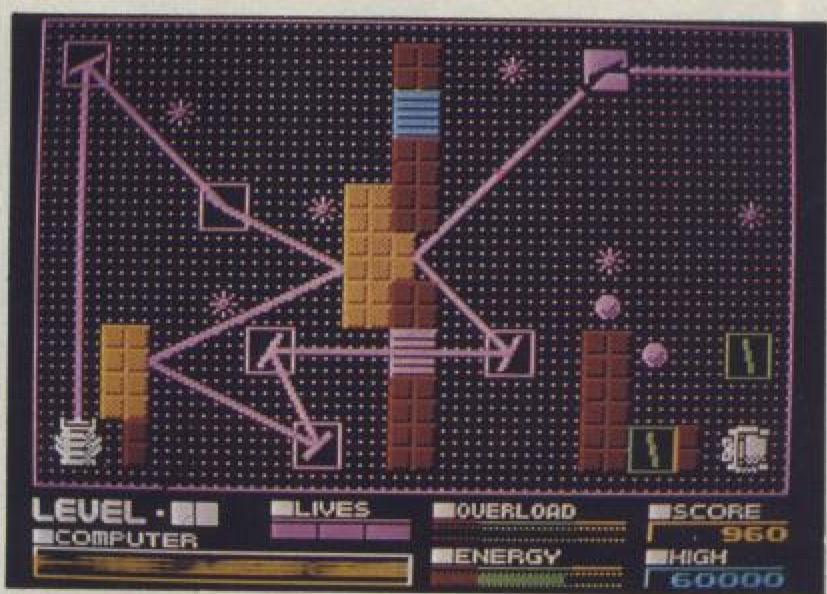


► *Deflektor*: **laser puzzle**

PAUL

" Deflektor **will no doubt be compared to Virgin Games's** Rebel **(Issue 44), though the reflection idea is taken much further here. I've always liked puzzle games such as** Think! **and** πr^2 **and** Deflektor **is one of the most absorbing ones I've seen in a while. It's really infuriating – and that's what makes it so fiendishly addictive. As the time ticks down, the sweat builds up.** Deflektor **is simple but cleverly effective. "**

83%



► *Rebel* **without a cause**

BYM

" Deflektor **is a problem-solving game for those with steady trains of thought – there's no rush and no panic (at least, not till the wobbly egg appears . . .), you've just got to work your mind around the screen. But don't think it's going to be easy. Hardened geniuses may find this a bit domestic at first, but it's very addictive. "**

79%

MIKE

" Deflektor **is quite entertaining at first, but I found it less addictive than most did. The graphics are very good, though. "**

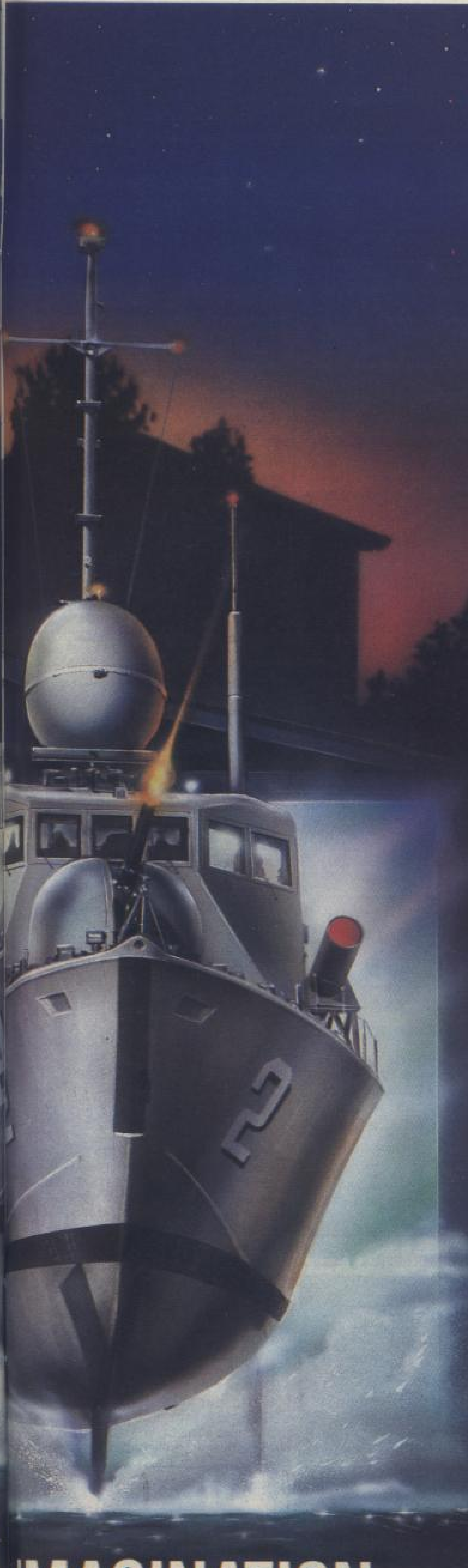
70%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: clear enough to show the puzzle
Sound: spot effects
Options: practice mode; demo
General rating: everything that makes a great puzzle game

Presentation	77%
Graphics	73%
Playability	85%
Addictive qualities	83%
OVERALL	**77%**


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R

IMAGINATION

Reviews

LAZER WHEEL

Producer: **M.A.D.**
Retail price: **£2.99**
Author: **Steve Parys**

Aliens are attempting to cross your eight-sector hyperspace causeway, and that makes you real mad. You'll have to defend this astronautical M25 with your spacecraft, which rotates at the centre of a circular area.

In each section there's a circling bomb on a short fuse, threatening your territory and flickering with increasing intensity as it approaches detonation. And those multimutated aliens travel around the perimeter of this space zone, within range of your blaster.

Some aliens are blocks, which when blasted release rotating circles (these in turn produce green discs that can be shot to temporarily keep alien bombs out of the zone and earn hit points); others are orbs, and destroying them reduces the damage done to the zone in which you're fighting.

But your own laser blasts can rebound from reflective spheres, produced when an alien target is missed, and damage your precious property.

Coloured bars in an eight-sectioned laser scan indicate the time remaining before a bomb explodes in each sector, and you can also use the laser scan to move to another sector.

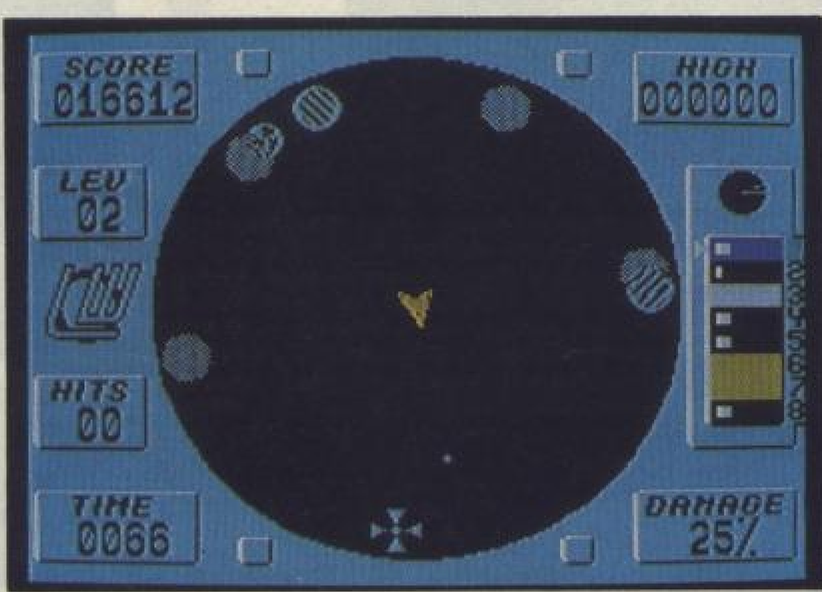
CRITICISM

● " I got *Asteroids* free in a six-pack of games with my first rubber-keyed Spectrum, and *Lazer Wheel* is much the same, right down to the oversized drain-cleaners. It's tough to cope with, too – there are only a few places where you can kill the drain-cleaners, and if you shoot anywhere else the shot rebounds. "
BYM **56%**

● **" The loading and title screens are very good, but as soon as you get into the game the poor graphics and frustrating movements are thoroughly nauseating. It's a bit like** Asteroids, **the ancient arcade game that I always regretted putting 10p in. But you can't even move so much in** Lazer Wheel. **"**
NICK **28%**

● *" There's an interesting idea behind* Lazer Wheel, *but alas playing it isn't so interesting: though there are eight levels the only change is in the speed of the aliens. "*
MIKE **44%**

▶ **Shooting little blobs – a new concept in entertainment**



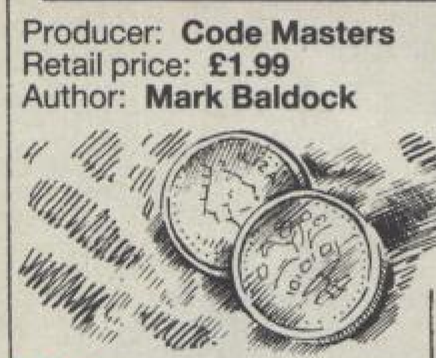
COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair, Cursor
Graphics: plain and unappealing
Sound: BP spot effects
General rating: a boring sprite-blaster

Presentation	48%
Graphics	44%
Playability	44%
Addictive qualities	34%
OVERALL	**43%**

FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR

Producer: **Code Masters**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **Mark Baldock**



Now's your chance to be a gambling man, ripping the monetary guts out of a fruit machine with all the panache of The Man Who Broke The Bank At Monte Carlo.

And it's just like Monte Carlo at Joe Scarface's One Arm Bandit Emporium in *Fruit Machine Simulator*, where you're faced with the traditional fruit-machine layout: three rotating reels marked with fruit and bell symbols.

Electronic money pays for your plays, and when you get a winning combination, only electronic cash is awarded, adding to a running total at the top of the screen.

Hold and nudge options are available, just like in the real coin-eaters – but only between 40p and £1.40 can be gambled during each turn, so dig deep into the pockets of your 501s, crack open your plumped-up piggy bank and let gambling commence. It may be immoral, but then maybe it's better than shooting things.

CRITICISM

● " I've walked past fruit machines in chip shops much more elaborate, complicated and fun than this. If you're into gambling, stick to spinning wheels in the real world. "
BYM **25%**

● *" Just try to imagine the most boring, monotonous and badly-presented machine you've ever seen. Then fill the money slot with chewing gum and imagine the fun you'll get out of it. Then you've experienced* Fruit Machine Simulator . . . *"*
PAUL **19%**

● **" I've never seen the appeal of fruit-machine simulators on computers – without the thrill of losing or winning real money the game seems pointless. The graphics and sound in** Fruit Machine Simulator **are unimpressive, and the fruit-machine idea just isn't playable. Maybe a few more subgames would have helped; but without the incentive of winning money this won't have much appeal. "**
ROBIN **46%**

▶ *Fruit Machine Simulator* **from Code Masters: why play more?**



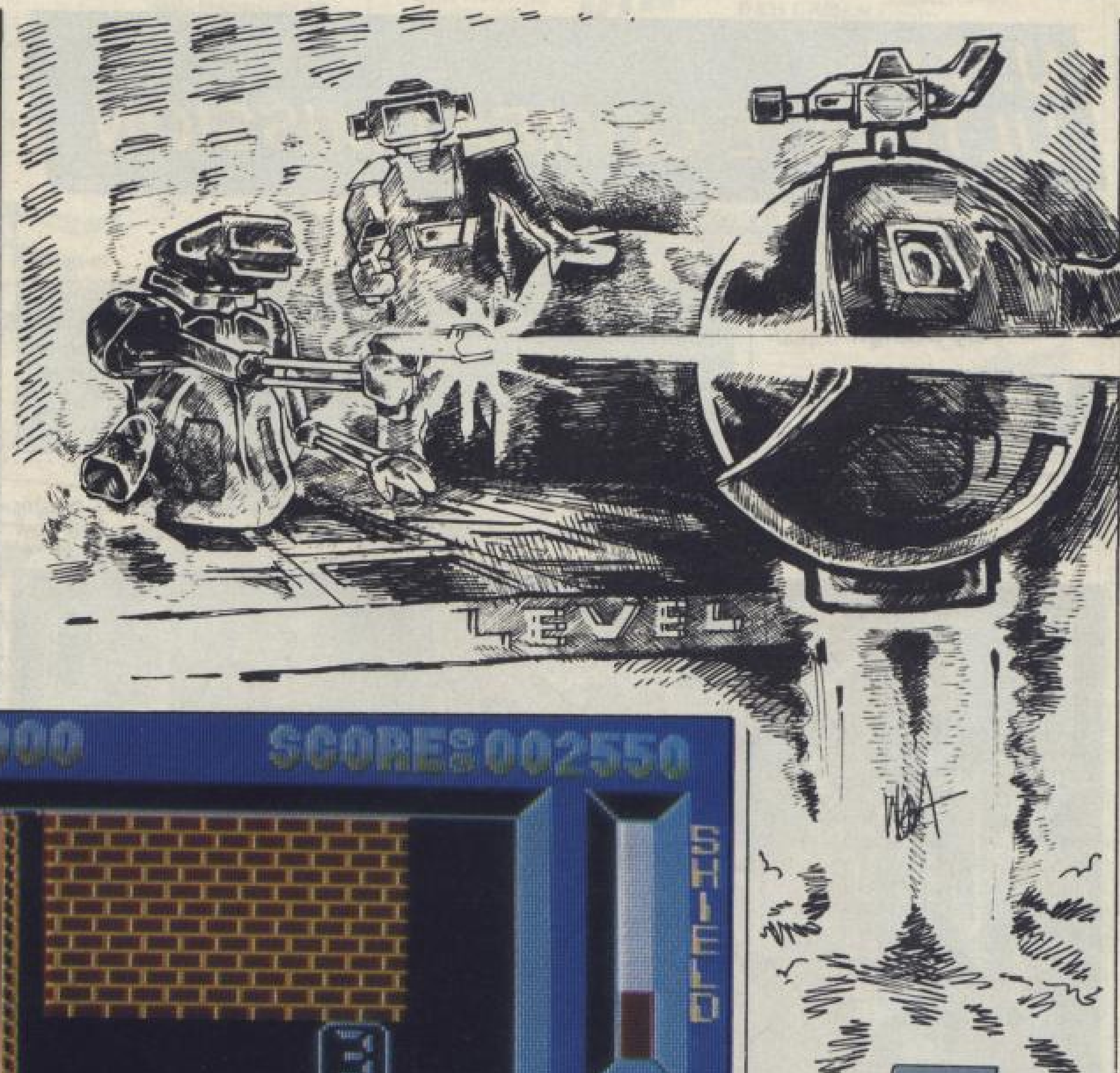
COMMENTS

Joysticks: none
Graphics: cluttered display
Sound: dull spot effects
Options: multiplayer option for one to four players
General rating: a simple game on a simple subject, with few incentives to make you play again

Presentation	34%
Graphics	39%
Playability	34%
Addictive qualities	25%
OVERALL	**30%**

LEVEL 5

Producer: **M.A.D.**
Retail price: **£2.99**
Authors: **Steve Joyce**



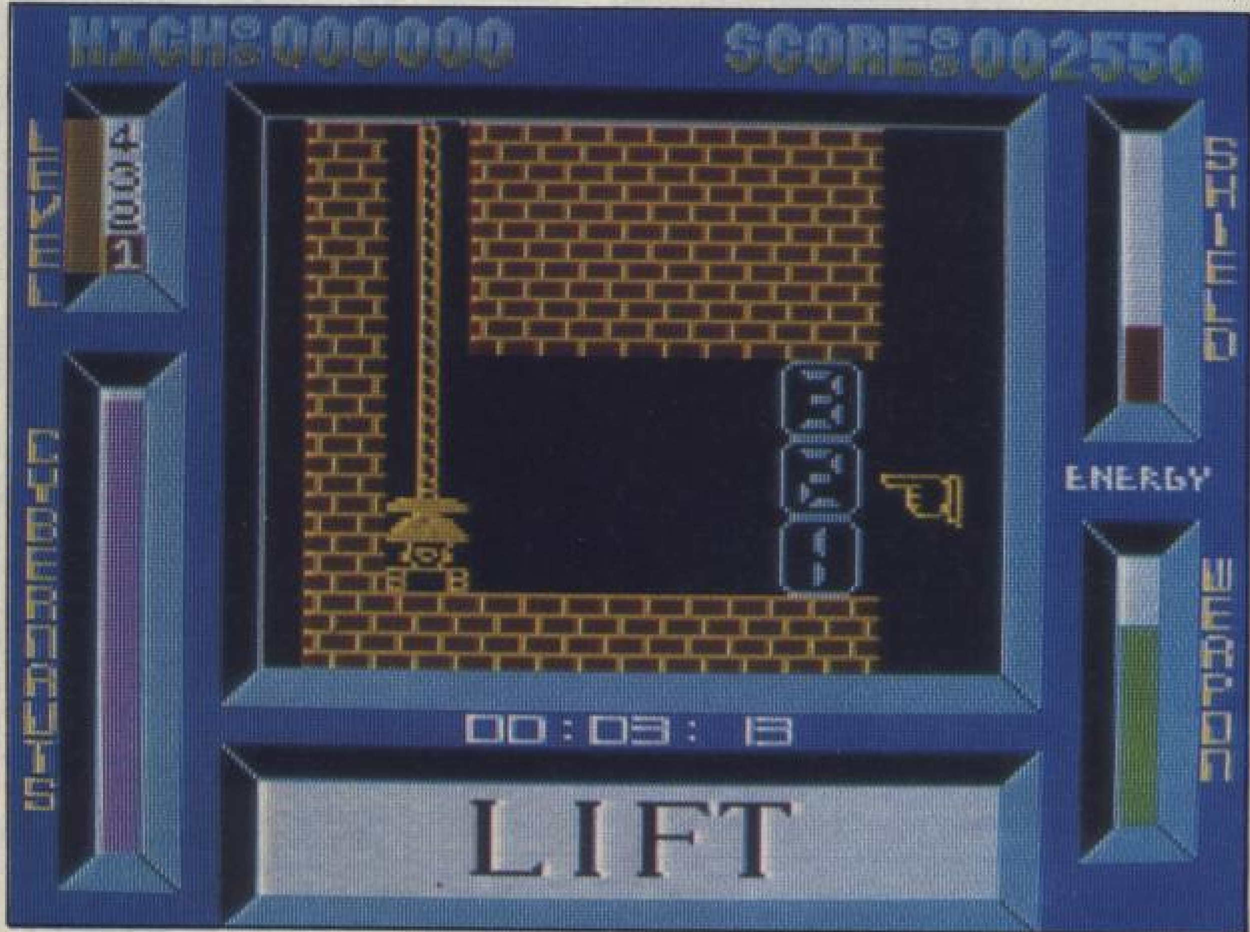
In an alien four-storey low-rise block, an information-gathering 'penetration-orb' is exploring the intricacies of each floor, shown on a bird's-eye-view map. But alien Cybernauts are in pursuit, firing their robotic socks off.

The orb's survival depends upon finding the small stock of weapons hidden around the complex and using them to reach the Cybernauts' own security computer. Controlling the penetration-orb, you can choose weapons by manoeuvring over an armoury point.

A force shield gives this globular sleuth some degree of protection, but it can be damaged and eventually destroyed by hits from alien weaponry and contact with the Cybernauts themselves.

Still, shield and weapon energy can be recharged at the complex's energy points.

If the menacing Cybernauts are beaten off by the fast-moving orb, they dematerialise only to reappear, faster, fitter, stronger, veritable Arnold Schwarzeneggers among androids, all thirsting after the penetration-orb's oily blood.



▶ *Level 5*: **fatal floors**

PAUL

" At first sight Level 5 **looks like a bad** Gauntlet **clone, with terrible graphics viewed from above. But it has a strange addictive quality which makes me want to keep playing, and some original, attractive little touches: the sliding doors (which automatically open when you approach them), for instance, and the lift, in which you can choose floors. "**

52%

BYM

" Maze games just don't seem to go out – and that's surprising when you look at Level 5. **Though the scrolling is smooth and the graphics are good, there's not much challenge in the boring task. Here's a playing tip in advance, though: the nasties get too nasty if one of their fellows gets the chop, so don't kill any! All you have to do is find the information you need and Bob's your uncle. "**

65%

BEN

" A lot more imagination should have gone into Level 5; **it's simplistic and primitive. There's a bit of fun to be had, but it won't take long for most players to get bored. The graphics, poorly-defined characters, scrolling and very limited sound also leave a lot to be desired. "**

43%

But as long as you can survive them, you can move to another floor – at least the lifts are in working order.

COMMENTS

Joystick: Kempston
Graphics: bad scrolling of simple characters on a monochromatic play area
Sound: unappealing
Options: definable keys, one or two players
General rating: a simple maze game – but perhaps too simple, and spoiled by its graphics

Presentation	52%
Graphics	53%
Playability	52%
Addictive qualities	52%
OVERALL	**53%**

Reviews

U.C.M. ULTIMATE COMBAT MISSION

Producer: **M.A.D.**
Retail price: **£2.99**
Authors: **Playability By Design**

Mandroid and Warmonger . . . names that turn the bowels of hardened men to water, perhaps the two most dangerous criminals to ever appear on the Spectrum screen.

Imprisoned in a satellite that orbits Earth, they've got out onto the roof – and they're not just holding up placards. These two have every intention of escaping. But guards soon appear on the scene, and our two protagonists will have to be more vicious and ruthless than ever before.

In one-player mode you control Warmonger; in two-player mode each player handles one of the maniacs.

They're equipped with forward-firing blasters and earn points (and thus extra lives) for every prison guard picked off.

But the escapees are blaster targets too. And when a few guards get together in a group, they can turn their fire upon Mandroid and Warmonger whichever direction the criminals take.

And even when you're a master criminal, playing on building sites is dangerous – some sections of the space prison are incomplete, and if Mandroid or Warmonger take a tumble, another life is lost. Whatever happens, blood is going to be spilled.

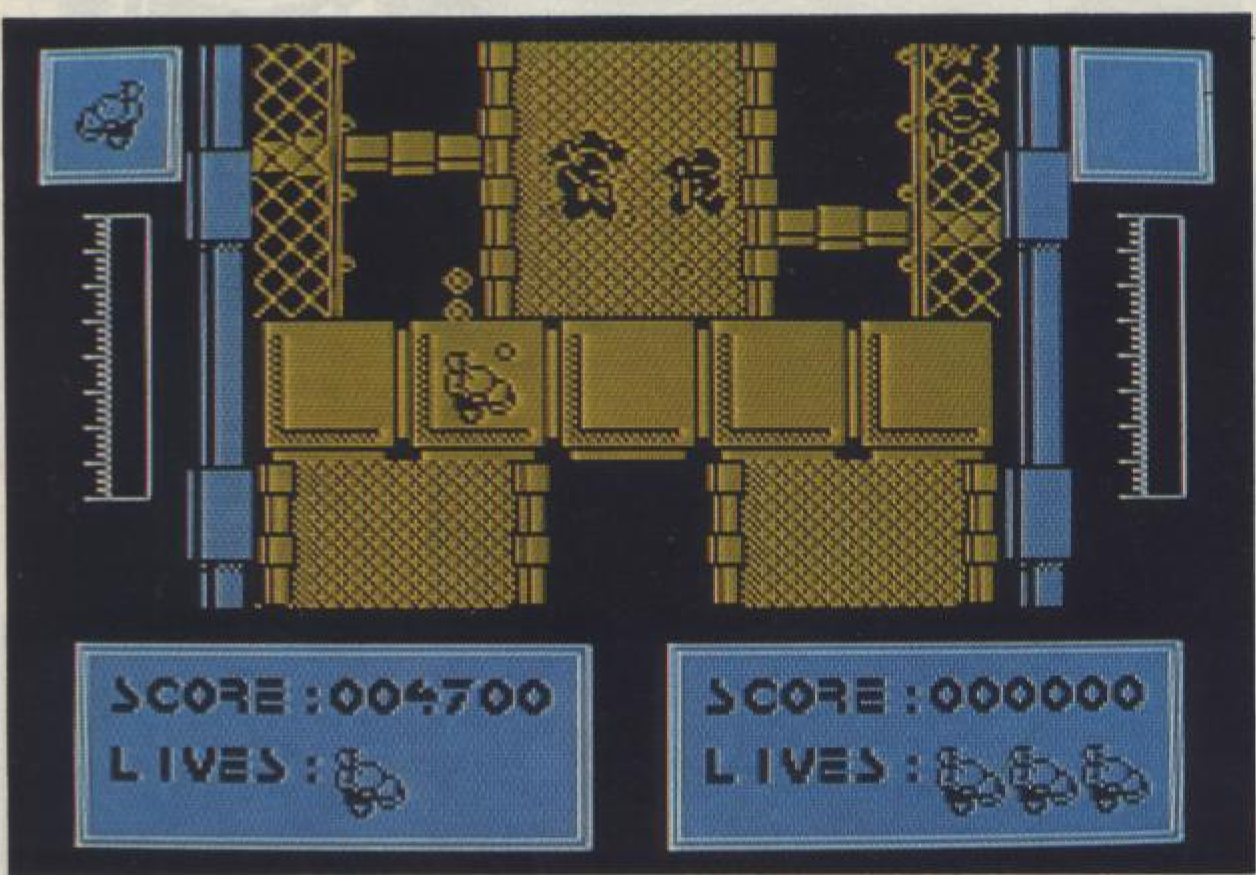
Among the members of Playability By Design is Dave Thompson, who also did Advance's *Butch Hard Guy* (65% Overall in Issue 38).



MIKE

" It's a pity Warmonger moves so slowly – this makes the difference between being the best and just being very good! The graphics are adequate, though minuscule, and the lack of colour doesn't affect the outstanding playability of U.C.M.. **And the level of difficulty is just right – between frustration and addiction. "**

89%



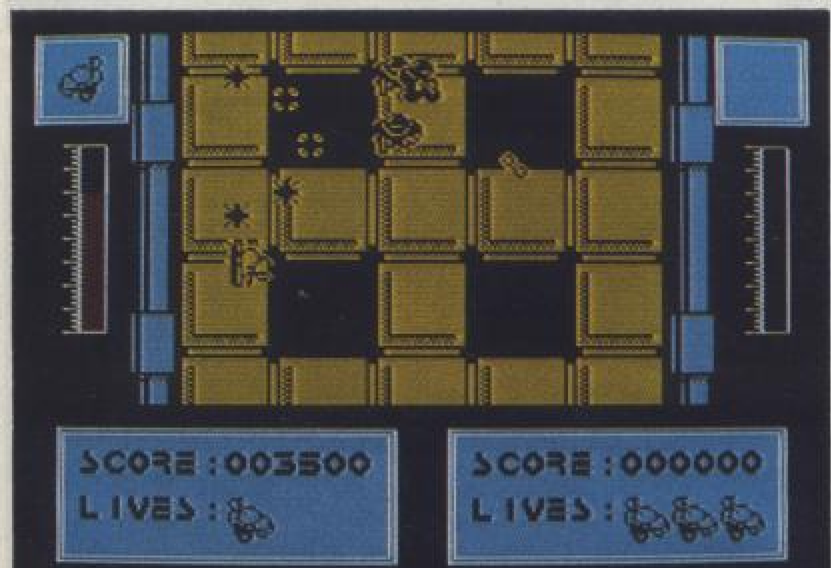
▶ *U.C.M.*: **butch, hard, and very addictive**

NICK

" A wickedly addictive game with fantastic sound on the 128K version, U.C.M. **has graphics very like Mikro-Gen's** Stainless Steel, **with bas-relief sprites and detailed backgrounds. The only problem is that Warmonger moves rather slowly. But the way the bazooka explodes is brilliant! "**

83%

▶ **That bazooka in full**



PAUL

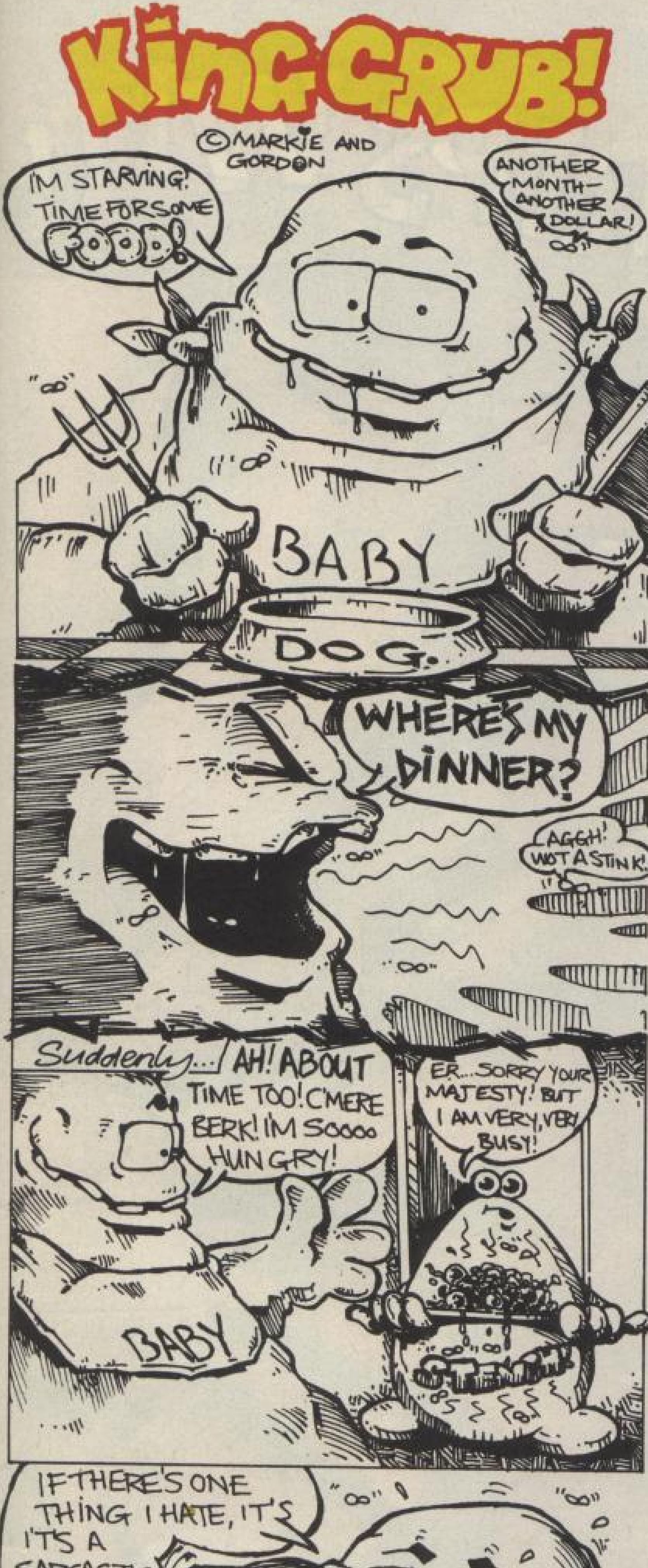
" Butch Hard Guy **is back!! The eponymous star of Dave Thompson's first game seems tougher than ever this time, and he's changed his name to Warmonger . . .** U.C.M. **is very simple but superbly presented, though like most vertically-scrolling monochrome games it has a display problem. (In this case, it's difficult distinguishing the enemy's bullets from your own.)** U.C.M. **scores highest in playability – you just have to have one more game. And though it's a bit tough to start with, perseverance is rewarded with bonuses: the graphics get better the further you go. So forget** Ikari Warriors **– judging from the demo on CRASH Issue 45,** U.C.M. **has the Elite game beat before it gets off the ground. "**

88%

COMMENTS

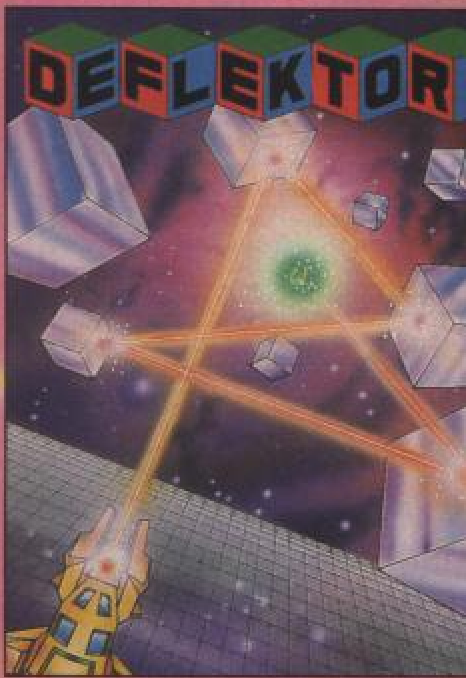
Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: nicely-animated; monochromatic
Sound: great Dave Whittaker tunes on 48 and 128K
Options: one or two players; definable keys
General rating: an addictive, mindlessly violent shoot-'em-up

Presentation	85%
Graphics	85%
Playability	87%
Addictive qualities	88%
OVERALL	**87%**



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DOG.
WHERE'S MY DINNER?
AGGH! WOT A STINK!
Suddenly...
AH! ABOUT TIME TOO! C'MERE BERK! I'M SOOOO HUNGRY!
ER...SORRY YOUR MAJESTY! BUT I AM VERY, VERY BUSY!
BABY
IF THERE'S ONE THING I HATE, IT'S
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PIG!
GAAAH!!!

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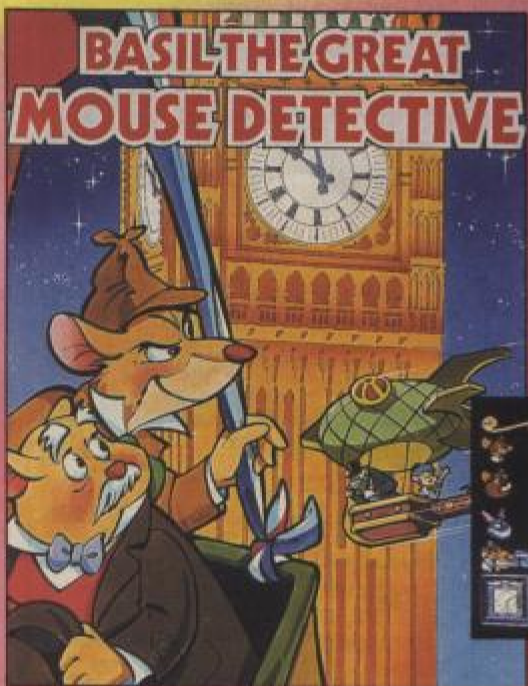
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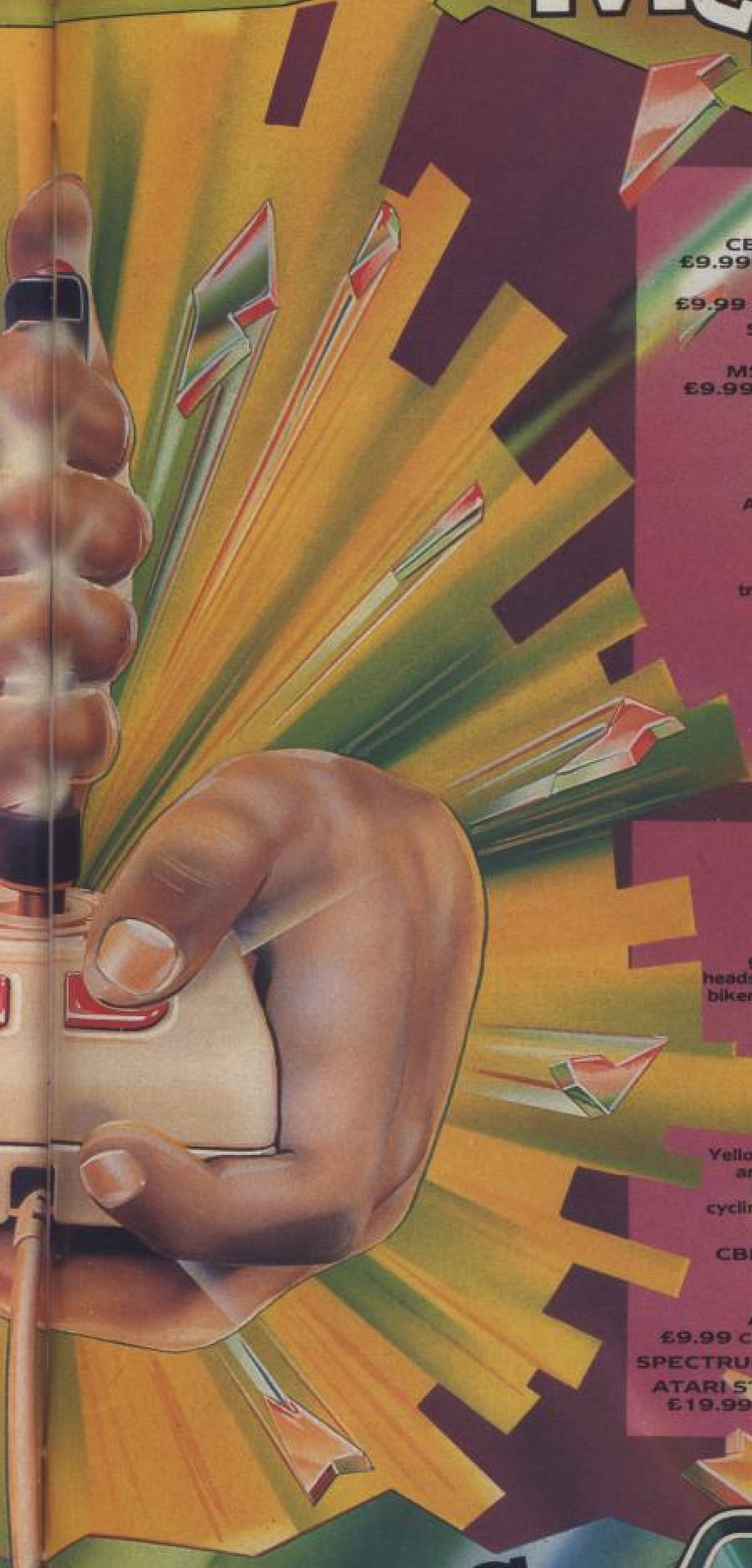
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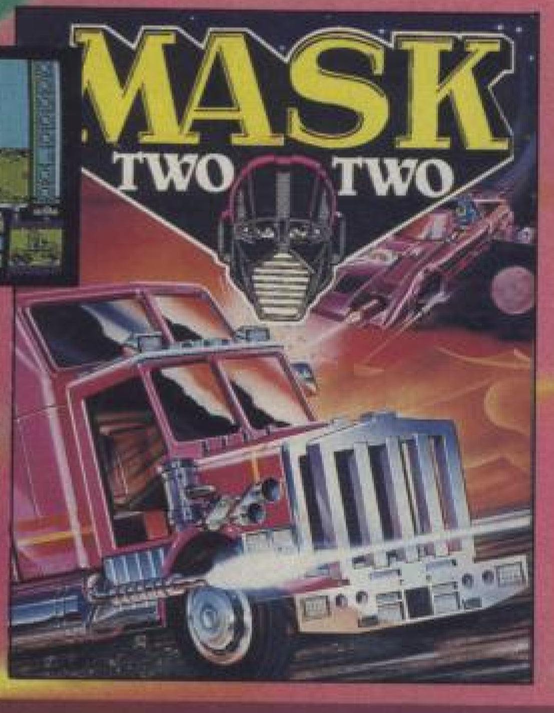
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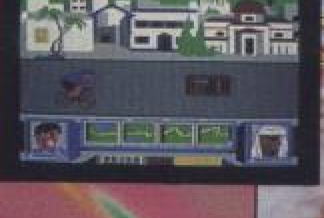


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PREVIEW

Coming soon to a Spectrum near you!



► Ocean's *Platoon*: depth in a Vietnam movie licence



► *Combat School*: practice for the real thing

FIRST OFF in a month of wild promises are seven, count' em, from **Ocean**. And three of these are big coin-op licences.

Combat School (from a Konami coin-op) offers all the thrills of Spectrum violence without actually hurting anyone – it's a simulation of military training, with features including assault courses, tough target practice, arm wrestling, chin-ups, an 'iron man' course and man-to-man combat with the US Army instructor. *Combat School* 'puts you and your joystick through hell', gloats the press pack – and after hell there's a real mission to put your skills to the test. Review next issue, with luck.

The Rastan Saga (from a Taito coin-op) is a sort of fantasy *Combat School* – but here the tests are demons, lava pits, 'the living dead and more', and you're the usual warrior king. It's back to the present with ***Gryzor***, though – this Konami coin-op licence, coming very soon, takes you through alien territory with guns blazing. Cor.

And it's almost back to *Combat School* with ***Platoon***, the game of the smashingly successful 1986 Vietnam film. There's more to *Platoon* than shooting 'em up; it's a combination of combat, exploration and collecting. That's out in January.

Also from Ocean, comes



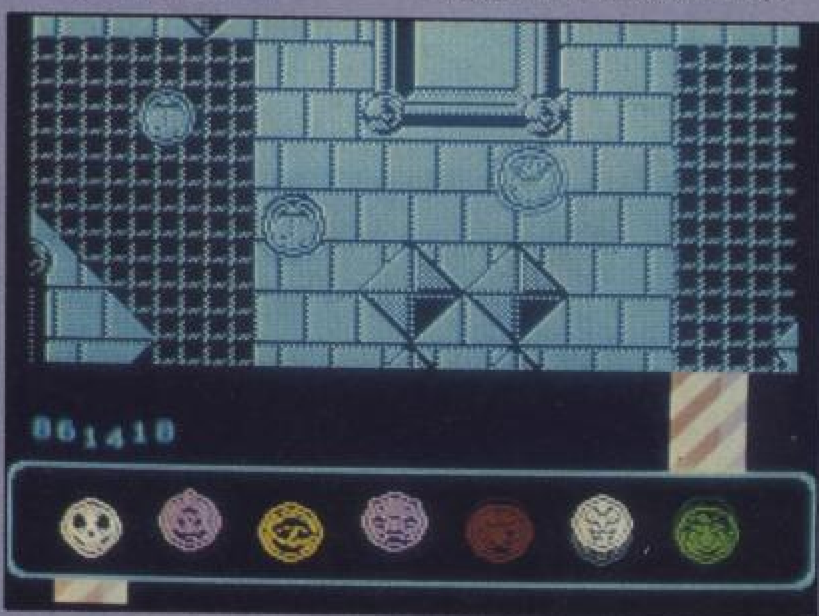
► Software Manager Gary Bracey (right) with two Madballs

► A trial of strength in Ocean's *Combat School*



Madballs by Denton Design – arcade action based on the disgusting TV cartoon and toys

► Ocean's *Madballs*: as seen in a disgusting cartoon

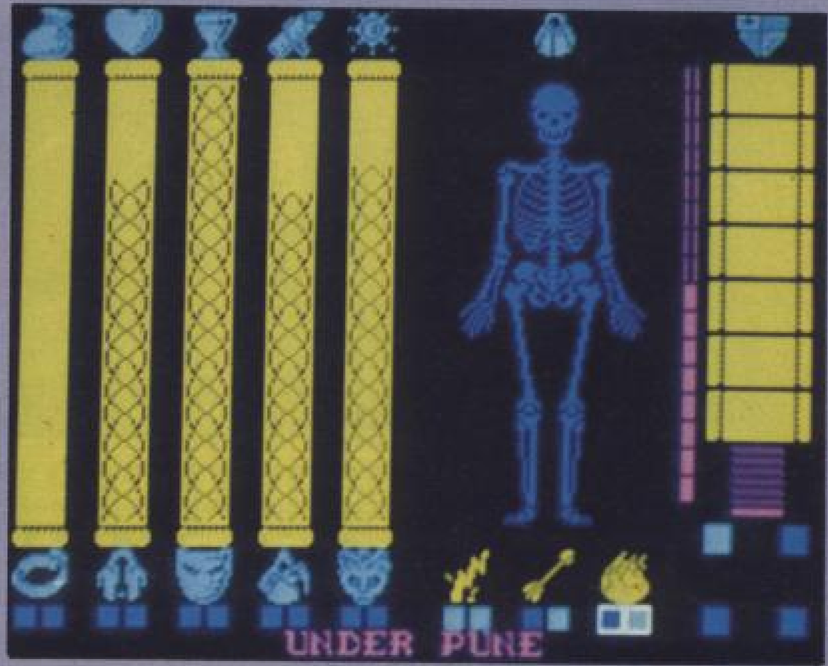




▶ **Ocean's *Basket Master*: relive every basket with an action replay**



▶ ***Deviants* from Players: *Joe Blade* in the 52nd century?**



▶ ***Enlightenment – Druid II*: rising from Firebird ashes 103 years on**



with names like Slobulus and Fist Sucker ('Eggs to smash! Chickens to squash!' they promise). And ***Where Time Stood Still*** by the same authors is a fighting game compared to *The Great Escape* (though it's 50 times larger, they claim). We already mentioned that this was in the pipeline under the working title of *Tibet* – and that's where it's set.

Basket Master, written by Spanish software house Dinamic, is a basketball sim with a TV touch – slow-motion action replay every time you score a basket!

Ocean's other sports game is ***Match Day II*** – see the separate panel for details. But still with the sporting life, **Tynesoft**'s ***Winter Olympiad '88*** (which is probably out at £7.95 on cassette by the time you read this) features six events from the 15th Winter Olympics, which are held in Calgary, Canada in February.

Ski-jumping, the slalom, downhill racing, the bobsled, a two-part biathlon and speed skating can hardly leave you cold. And compared to all that, **Players**'s sport simulation is a bit of watery relaxation – ***Riding The Rapids*** takes the eponymous player white-water canoe-racing on four different courses packed with natural obstacles.

Also from Players comes the devious ***Deviants***, search-and-destroy in a mutant-infested age; it's by Colin Swinbourne, whose *Joe Blade* earned 84% in Issue 44. And then there's ***Radius***, a straightforward horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up-plus-subgame rolling on more enemy ships than you've had hot lead; and ***Cybernation***. This odd arcade adventure takes you into the strange and beautiful world of intergalactic toilet attendants – all across the galaxy these little men lie sleeping, and you have to wake them up in time for the tourist season. Talk about contrived . . .

Well, yes, while we're talking about contrived, there's no link at all between *Cybernation* and ***Werewolves Of London*** from **Viz Design** (yet another Ariolasoft label). 'The full moon approaches', they say, and we all know what happens then – some clever marketing maniac goes and puts *Werewolf Rap – Silver Bullet mix* on the reverse side of the Spectrum cassette. So you get music as well as blood, guts and arcade adventure: it's a simple case of chew what you can while fangs are good.

Among the unusual features of *Werewolves Of London* (the game that is, not the lycanthropes – they're dead ordinary) are sprite-filled screens crammed with as many as eight characters at a time, all doing their own thing.

Perhaps it's all just too strong stuff – but you can always sit down in front of **TV Games**, the new licence label from Domark. Its first three releases are based on game shows: ***Countdown*** (the real thing's on Channel 4) features word and number puzzles with pressing time limits and 'Cecil the mathematical host', while ***Bullseye*** (ITV) tests your darts coordination as well as general knowledge. (You throw three darts, and how they hit the board determines the question you'll have to answer – sounds very like the PC version of *I Ching*, but that's another story.)

And ***Treasure Hunt*** comes from that popular Channel 4 show of helicopters, helplessness, Anneka Rice and faked timing. It's just as seen on TV: you're given clues to the treasure's location, and you guide a helicopter round (well, over) the country to find it.

All three TV Games are out at £7.95.

The season's big Spectrum sequel is ***Enlightenment – Druid II*** from Firebird, which brought out the Smashed original just a year ago. *Enlightenment – Druid II* continues the adventures of the eponymous Hasrinaxx, returning after 103 years (that's 103 times real time) to free the land of Belorn from an evil power. Thrill to the 32 different spells! Gasp at the 15 treacherous levels! It's out for £7.95 'soon', though that's what they all say.

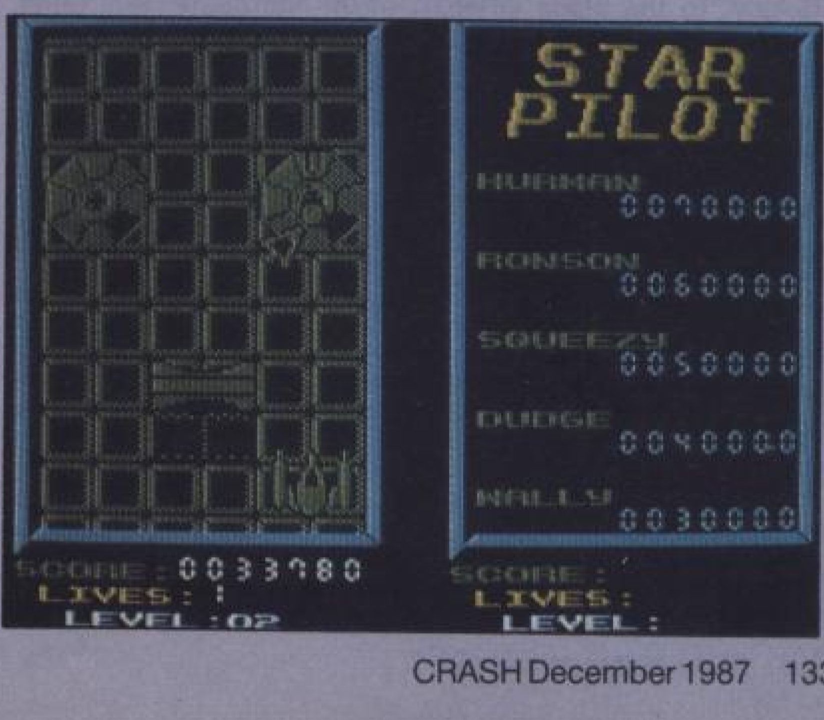
Also at Firebird, the Graftgold programmers – whose credits include *Avalon*, *Quazatron*, and *Uridium* – are converting Taito's coin-op ***Flying Shark***. It'll be underwater for a while yet, though.

And in the budget range, ***Star Pilot*** is a vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up with a two-player option – fit for a good blast, as the review next issue shows.

Just room for a couple more glimpses. From **Konami** comes the arcade licence ***Salamander***, and Hewson's budget label **Rack-It** will soon release the puzzle game ***Anarchy***.

BARNABY PAGE

▶ **Firebird's budget *Star Pilot*: review next issue**



▶

PREVIEW



▶ Ocean's *Match Day II*: feature-packed field seen from the terraces

IF IT'S WORTH PLAYING ONCE . . .

Match Day II
Ocean £7.95 November

. . . it's worth writing again. At least, that's what Jon Ritman reckons. And now his original Match Day (86% in CRASH Issue 13; more appearances in the Hotline Chart than any other game, though never Number One!) is reborn as a feature-packed Match Day II.

It's got leagues, for a start. You pick your teams, then off you all go in a league consisting of computer and human players. Maybe you get a bit bored with this and fancy going into the Cup competition – well, you can, and when you've finished you can even go back to the league, to the place where you left it.

Indeed, you can even come back to a game months later, via a clever little code system which restores the computer to its previous status.

And, as in the first Match Day, you can play the computer or a human opponent. You may have thought the goalkeeper in Match Day was a pretty clever dude, but the Match Day II keep' has obviously been to the Peter Shilton School of Training – he can move along the six-yard box, while you still have control of the defender closest to the ball. And you can even forget about controlling the goalkeeper altogether and let the computer do the diving for you.

There are several game durations available (Ritman's dropped the 45-minute time, though – he reckons nobody ever used it!).

Things have changed on the 3-D field as well as the terraces. The players have lost the solidity so associated with their movement in the first game, but in taking off a bit of weight they've gained a few more skills. When dribbling the ball you can kick it with three different strengths, monitored by a little meter. The strength can be changed while the player is moving, of course, for extra added realism.

You can also define the options to allow you to pass the ball backwards – very useful in tricky situations.

And the players are a bit more manoeuvrable when it comes to rebounds. All bounces in Match Day II are very realistic – even headers can be controlled with great accuracy.

Graphics are by Bernie Drummond, who worked with Ritman on Head Over Heels.

DOMINIC HANDY

CORRECTION – MULTIPOKES

Here's Jon North**'s Speedlock loader and DATA for specific games – the correct versions. Don't use the loader and DATA in Playing Tips, which crept in under false pretences (but do read the editorial about it).**

```
10 REM SPEEDLOCK BY JON NORTH
15 REM CORRECT VERSION
20 CLEAR 3e4: LET d=23296
30 FOR f=1e3 TO 1021: LET t=0
40 PRINT "CHECKING LINE ";f
50 READ a$,a: FOR g=1 TO 5
60 LET b=(CODEa$(g*2-1)-48-
   7*(CODEa$(g*2-1)>57))*16+(CODE
   a$(g*2)-48-7*(CODE a$(g*2)>57))
70 POKE d,b: LET t=t+b
80 LET d=d+1: NEXT g
90 IF t=a THEN GOTO 110
100 PRINT "ERROR IN ";f: STOP
110 NEXT f: LET t=0
120 FOR f=23404 to 1e9: READ a
130 IF a>256 THEN GOTO 160
140 POKE f,a
150 LET t=t+(f-23394)*a: NEXT f
160 IF t<>a THEN PRINT "ERROR IN GAME
   DATA": STOP
170 LOAD ""CODE
180 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
1000 DATA "2A6E5BED7B",603
1001 DATA "6C5BDD2166",555
1002 DATA "5B0606C506",306
1003 DATA "00DD4E00DD",520
1004 DATA "23114858E5",441
1005 DATA "C5EDB0214B",718
1006 DATA "587EFE3620",554
1007 DATA "023600EB36",345
1008 DATA "C91E96CD48",658
1009 DATA "58C1E109C1",708
1010 DATA "10D92A705B",478
1011 DATA "ED5B725B01",534
1012 DATA "0004EDB02A",459
1013 DATA "745BED5B76",653
1014 DATA "5B010004ED",333
1015 DATA "B02A785B36",483
1016 DATA "002A7A5B36",309
1017 DATA "7E23365B2A",348
1018 DATA "7C5BE90160",545
1019 DATA "365232110E",217
1020 DATA "0C18101832",126
1021 DATA "0E19160000",61
```

WIZBALL – INFINITE LIVES

```
1022 DATA 200,175,189,228,110,238,7,
     252,0,0,0,64,115,255,67,
     255,9,255,175,50,188,144,
     62,201,50,62,0,49,0,97,251,195,128,
     143,107601: REM INFINITE LIVES
```

Add this line for immortality:

```
175 POKE 23430,188
```

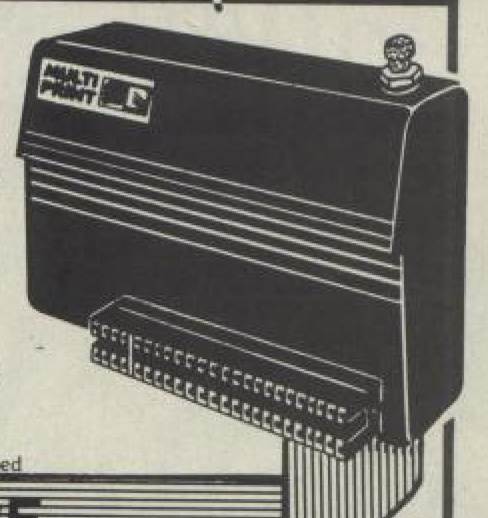
ATHENA – KEEP THAT GODDESS GOING!

```
1022 DATA 0,125,248,228,110,238,7,
     136,0,17,216,84,115,139,67,139,0,
     139,175,50,221,190,50,113,205,
     50,213,190,50,155,201,50,42,217,
     49,216,158,251,195,192,240,174509
```

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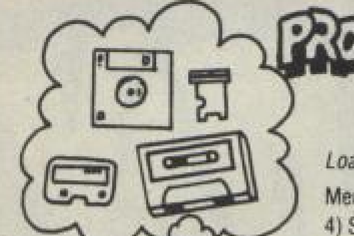
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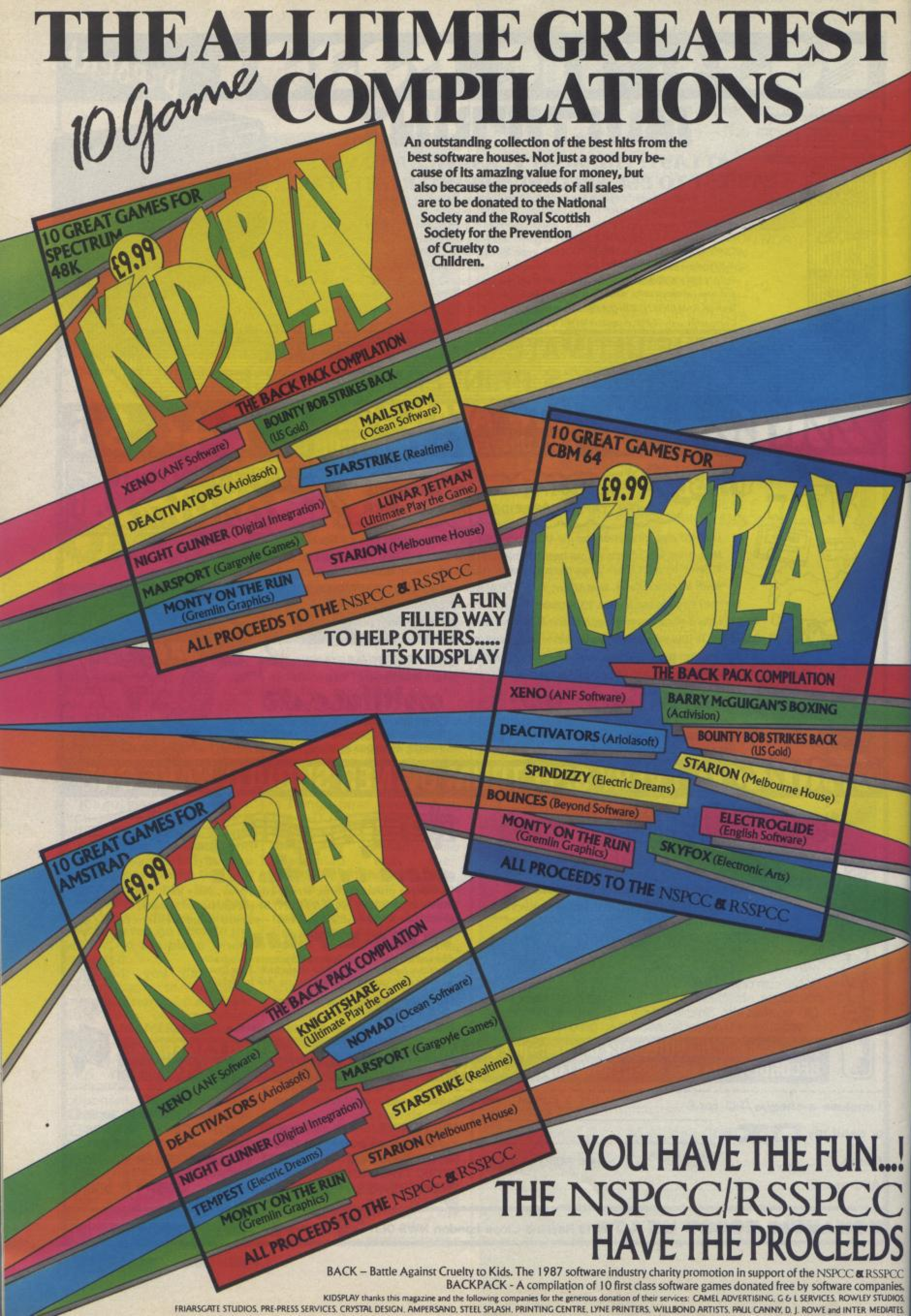
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Address ....

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KIDSPLAY thanks this magazine and the following companies for the generous donation of their services: CAMEL ADVERTISING, G & L SERVICES, ROWLEY STUDIOS, FRIARSGATE STUDIOS, PRE-PRESS SERVICES, CRYSTAL DESIGN, AMPERSAND, STEEL SPLASH, PRINTING CENTRE, LYNE PRINTERS, WILLBOND ARTISTS, PAUL CANNY, D. J. ROWE and INTER MEDIATES.

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THE CLASSIFIEDS

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SPECTRUM 128 and MIDI Interface, also Casio CZ-101. I'd also like to hear from anyone into computer music. Write to: Jamie Bell, *29 Westonbirt Court, Ebley Close, London, SE15 6BH.*
WANTED ROTRONICS WAFERS (not 16K), also a Multiface 1. Does anyone want a ZX81 with 16K RAM and software? Tel: 0403 68701. Evenings or weekends.
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HOMEGROWN SOFTWARE

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IS THERE ANYONE who is running any PBM games? If so I would be interested in playing any game. Send details to: Marc Cole, *21 Farmlees, Charfield, Glos GL12 8JA.*
WIN THE LEAGUE TITLE. A brand new football management game, where only the best win. Cash prizes. Starts soon. Send S.A.E 9-inch by 4-inch to: FDS, *85 Fortescue Road, Colliers Wood, London, SW19 2EA.*
VESUVIAN, lead your party on a quest for fortune and glory in a huge adventure. £5 start. Write to: Evilseekers, *Vesuvian*, Maim Games, *48 Ledgers Road, Slough, Berks, SL1 2RL.*

PEN PALS

COMPUTER PEN PALS CLUB. Send a 50p coin and I will send you the name and address of your pen pal. Write to: Keith Bailey, *51 Lawson Avenue, Stanground, Peterborough, PE2 8PN.*
PEN PAL WANTED male or female, own Spectrum 128-48K. Please write to: John Locke, *24 Acacia Drive, Barrhead, Scotland, G78 1PW.* Phone: 041 881 0335.
I AM RICHARD. I have a Spectrum 128, like to swap 128 only games, prefer above 17 years. Write to: Richard, *19 Hospital Road, Castlederg, Co. Tyrone, N. Ireland BT81 7BU.*
WANTED PEN PAL to swap games. Male or female aged between 13/15 (prefer female). If you are interested write to: Richard Farrou, *14 Newmarket Road, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 3SN.*
PEN PAL WANTED aged about 12-13 years. Write to: Curtis Mangnall, *11 Hazel Avenue, Westoughton, Bolton, BL5 2NZ.*
I WOULD LIKE to contact anyone who will exchange hints, tips and software with me, male and female alike. Send list or information about what interests you in the market to: Colin Edwards, *33 Arodene Road, London, SW5 2BQ.*
HI! I AM 11 years of age. I have over 400 games. All letters answered, send 50p P&P. Send all the games you want. Replies first-class mail. Scott Campbell, *24 Darnley Drive, Caprington, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, Scotland, KA1 4UF.*

If your ad isn't featured this month, don't despair! We'll do our best to get it in ASAP ono (as they say in classifieds), and if the worst comes to the worst (which it hasn't yet, but we're waiting) you can always send the ad in again. Don't forget to fill out the whole form, give unflinching obedience to the small print below, and **USE BLOCK CAPITALS!** (Otherwise the worst could come to the worst.)

1 Individuals and small organisations such as fanzines and homegrown-software publishers are welcome to use the CRASH classifieds, but professional businesses cannot. Paid-for classifieds for businesses will probably be introduced soon.
2 Classified ads should not be more than 30 words long (numbers, postcodes etc count as one word each), and should be written in the boxes provided; there is no box-number service, so **YOUR AD COPY MUST INCLUDE YOUR ADDRESS AND/OR PHONE NUMBER**.
3 Classified ads must be submitted on a CRASH classifieds form, or a photocopy of the form.
4 Absolutely no ads for selling or swapping pirated software or which encourage software piracy will be accepted.
5 CRASH reserves the rights to edit, publish and not publish classified ads without reference to the advertiser, and the magazine is not liable for any loss caused to advertisers through their own wording of ad copy or the appearance or nonappearance of ads.
6 If you send an ad in PLEASE don't ring us up asking when it's going to be published – we'll just print as many in each issue as we can (the worst coming to the worst notwithstanding).

I WANT A FREE CRASH CLASSIFIED!

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

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.... **POSTCODE** ....

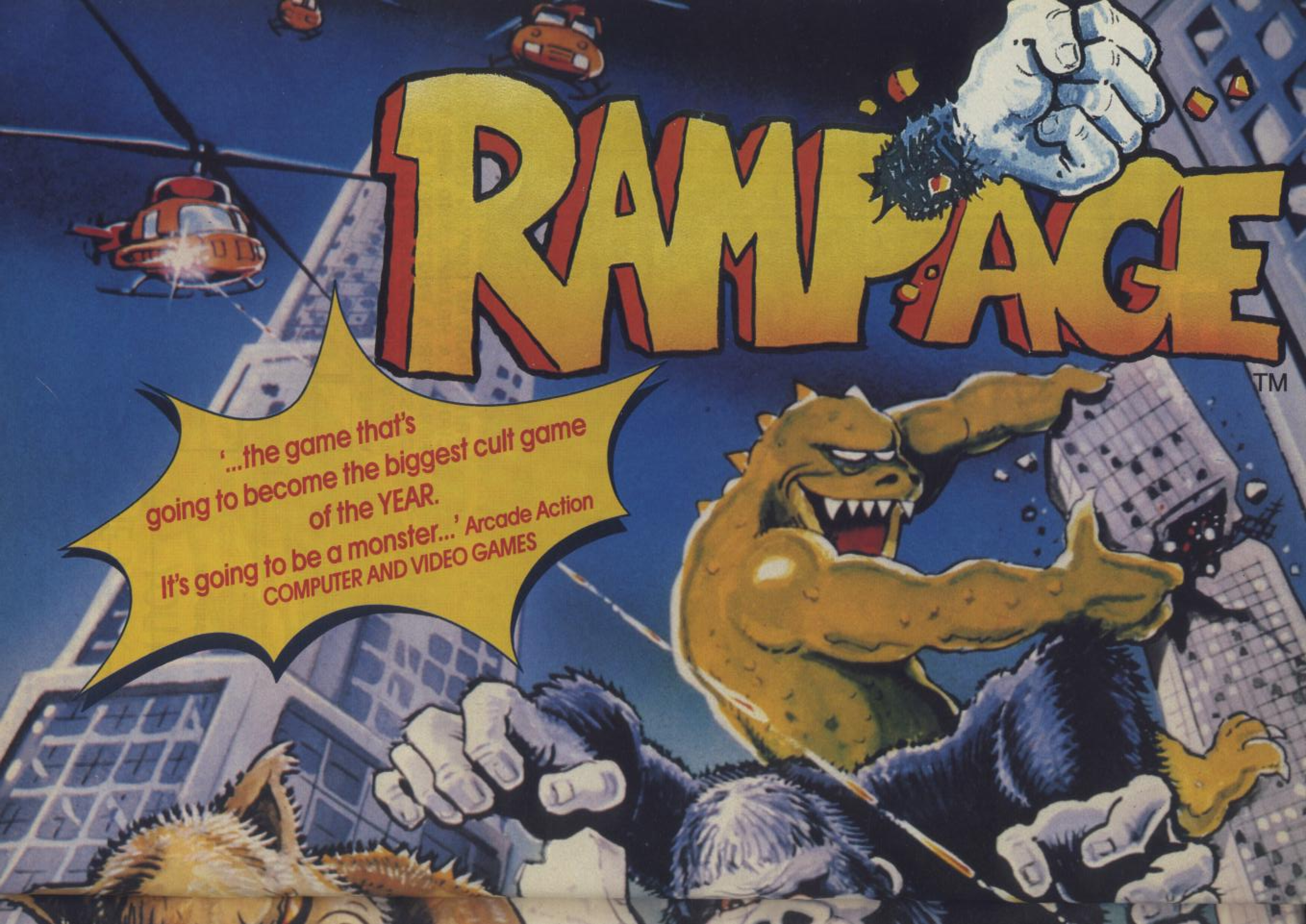
TELEPHONE NUMBER ....

WRITE YOUR AD COPY IN THE BOXES, CHOOSE A HEADING, AND SEND THIS FORM (OR A PHOTOCOPY) TO: THE CLASSIFIEDS, CRASH, *PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB*

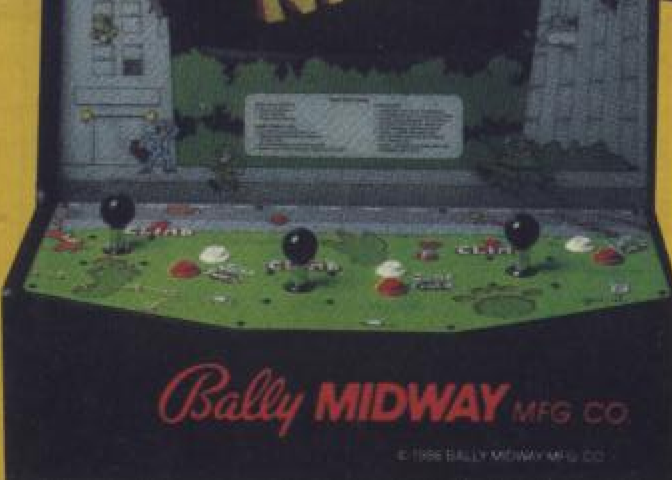
WRITE AD COPY HERE . . .

HEADINGS (TICK ONE)

- CRASH BACK NUMBERS ☐ (OFFERED OR WANTED)
- FANZINES ☐
- HARDWARE SALES ☐
- HARDWARE SWAP ☐
- HARDWARE WANTED ☐
- HOMEGROWN SOFTWARE ☐
- PBM ☐
- PEN PALS ☐
- SOFTWARE SALES ☐
- SOFTWARE SWAP ☐
- SOFTWARE WANTED ☐
- OTHER ☐


RAMPAGE™
'...the game that's going to become the biggest cult game of the YEAR.' Arcade Action
It's going to be a monster...' COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES





Officially licenced from one of the most original and popular arcade games ever created, Rampage is the game where the nice guys don't get a look in. Grab your way through Chicago, punch up New York and jump on San Francisco. This is your chance to become one of three indescribably monsterous characters on a rampage through 85 cities in an enduring 768 different days of destruction.

ACTIVISION

Mail Order: Activision (UK) Ltd, Units 3 & 4 Lloyds Close, Finedon Road Industrial Estate, Wellingborough, Northampton NN8 4SR Tel: (0933) 76768.

Commodore 64/128 Cassette (£9.99) and Disk (£12.99) ZX Spectrum 48k/128k/+ (£9.99). Amstrad CPC Cassette (£9.99) and Disk (£14.99). Atari ST (£14.99). Atari XE/XL cassette (£9.99) and Disk (£14.99).

ET AL

GOGGLE!

COMING IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS

VIDEO FILMS make ideal presents for Christmas, and with so many budget-priced cassettes around you can't fail to find something suitable. **MGM/UA** November releases range from the Spielberg scary ***Poltergeist*** to the heavy-going, but dramatically rewarding, ***Dr Zhivago***, both at £12.99.

And then there's Alan Parker's gyrating movie, ***Fame*** (£9.99) complemented by the equally talented ***Pinocchio*** (£8.99). But my favourite (and probably yours) is the third in the series of ***Tom And Jerry*** classics at a mere £8.99.

There's plenty around on the rental side, too. **MGM/UA**'s big one is ***Running Scared***, a comedy starring Gregory Hines and American humorist Billy Crystal as two side-splitting cops who bend the rules to clean up crime. But after coming off suspension for a 'big mistake' they decide to hand in their badges – but must still work out their last 30 days in the force.

Warner Home Video sets November 23 alight with two zany comedies. ***Mannequin***, the movie from which Starship's worldwide chart hit *Nothing's Gonna Stop Us Now* came, is the story of a fashion-dummy designer who falls in love with his own creation. It then miraculously comes to life in the form of Kim Cattrall – some people get all the luck!

Warner's second release is ***Little Shop Of Horrors***. It's based on the stage musical comedy, with a star-studded cast including Rick Moranis, Bill Murray, Steve Martin, John Candy and James Belushi.

Still with strong soundtracks, **Guild Home Video**'s December 15 release ***American Anthem*** includes songs from Andy Taylor, Mr. Mister, Stevie Nicks and INXS. The story's set in the demanding world of top gymnastics and of course there's a parallel love story, and then those championships which everyone has to train for . . .

Off the parallel bars and down to earth, we come to **RCA/Columbia**'s ***84 Charing Cross Road***. It was chosen for the 1987 Royal Film Premiere which the Queen Mother attended, so expect a beautifully-crafted love story in this adaptation of the book, where Anthony Hopkins plays the bookshop manager and Anne Bancroft the sharp-witted young writer.

Two actors who first starred together in the 1957 classic *Gunfight At The OK Corral* are back together – Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas co-star in Touchstone's latest **Rank**-distributed film, ***Tough Guys***. After 30 years of hard time for train-robbing, two old-timers are released upon the unsuspecting American public. But things have changed since they got locked up. Their old haunts have been turned into gay bars and now people wear strangely-coloured clothes. As if this weren't bad enough, the cop who arrested them all those years ago is determined to catch them again and someone else has still got a contract out on them. They're out looking for respect – but there's not much of that around nowadays!

Rank's other big release, ***The Fourth Protocol***, follows Frederick Forsyth's famous novel about a terrifying KGB plot to smuggle bits of a nuclear bomb into Britain, assemble it, and then detonate it. Pierce Brosnan (TV's Remington Steele) plays the steely-eyed Russian secret agent and Michael Caine is the British spycatcher on his trail.

At the end of November **Entertainment In Video** releases ***The Good Wife*** with Aussies Rachel Ward and Bryan Brown teaming up for the sizzling sensual movie of the month. It's definitely not for clean-up-the-screen campaigners like Mary Whitehouse, but received favourable reviews in the cinema.

In fact, Mrs Whitehouse had better not be around for the next few months as the fifth in the series of ***Friday The 13th*** films crawls onto the streets. **CIC Video** has the latest in the bloodcurdling series on which the (in)famous Domark game was based. Jason is long gone, but his victims (like the viewers) still have their memories . . .

If you like tough, all-action thrillers then **Guild Home Video** could have something for you on December 1 in ***Extreme Prejudice***. Hard man Michael Ironside plays the leader of a crack military group which enters a small Texas town looking for information held by the local drug-dealer. Nick Holte is the modern day Texas Ranger who doesn't like either of the parties in his town.

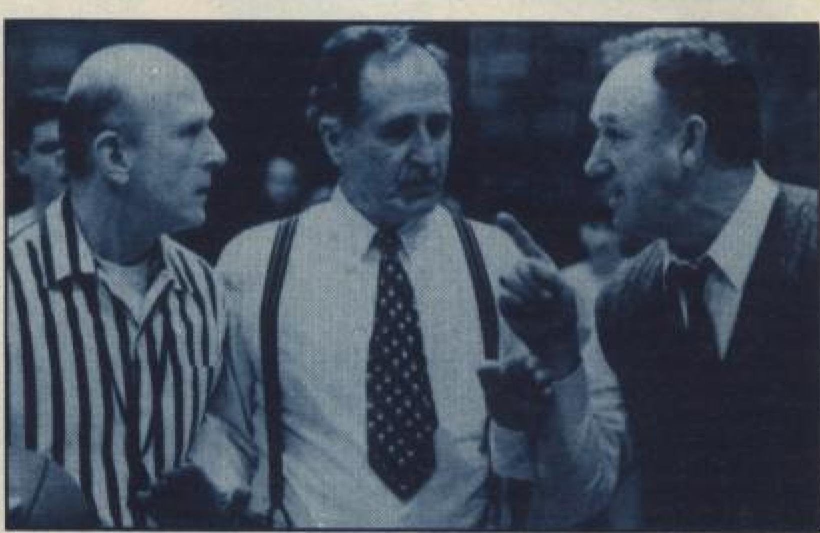
Calling ***Star Trek*** fans everywhere! Mark down December 4 in your diary – the fourth of the *Star Trek* films, ***The Voyage Home***, goes boldly onto the small screen courtesy of **CIC Video**. Leonard Nimoy, famous for playing Mr Spock, also directs this one.



► **Michael Caine (right) and Pierce Brosnan in *The Fourth Protocol*: Forsyth thriller on the small screen**

The crew of the *USS Enterprise* (now they're in a Klingon ship, of course . . . I hope you've all seen *Star Trek III*) travel back to the present day (does that make sense?) to get a humpback whale and save their own civilisation which has a whale-talking probe hanging over its head – sadly, humpback whales are extinct in the 21st century . . .

Even with such a wacky story line *The Voyage Home* will no doubt be a hit with diehard Trekkies.



► *Best Shot*: **Gene Hackman (right) shoots a small town to the basketball big time**

BEST SHOT

RCA/Columbia .... PG

IT'S 1951, it's autumn and basketball is flourishing in the small town of Hickory, Indiana. From a mysterious background Norman Dale (Gene Hackman) is appointed the new high-school coach. His only friends are the high-school principal who hired him and Shooter (Dennis Hopper) – the town drunk, but a mine of information on basketball and once a great player.

People don't take too kindly to Dale's outsider techniques of training the Hickory Huskers. What's all this running about waving arms, why doesn't he start shooting? But Dale knows the players can shoot, what they lack is discipline and the will to win – and that's where he comes in.

Introducing new techniques which could take the team to stardom, he risks being thrown out by a collection of locals eager for small-town success.

To bring the team together he enlists Shooter as his assistant and guide through the state play-offs. With Shooter's knowledge and Dale's discipline they prove to be a winning team. But can Shooter stay off the bottle till the finals and will the townsfolk keep the volatile coach?

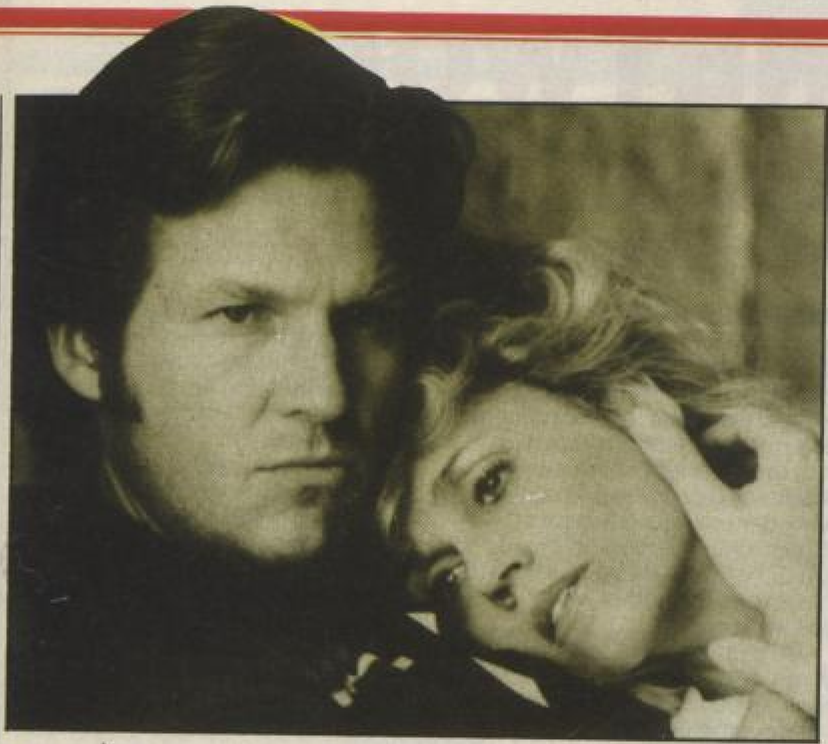
Dennis Hopper is the real star of *Best Shot*, creating such an aura it's unbelievable. You can range from hating him for ruining the team's games to feeling sorry for the pathetic figure. And as usual Gene Hackman commands all around him with the greatest efficiency.

Every game builds up the tension, so by the real final you're absolutely drained. There's lots of story and lots of action – *Best Shot* is much more than just a film about basketball.

DOMINIC HANDY 88%

There's Gene Hackman and a lot of feet in the foreground; oddly, for another American temple-of-sport film, the self-effacing characters are kept well in the background. There's no-one to hero-worship, not even Hackman, really. But with Jerry Goldsmith's veritable symphony on the soundtrack and some excellent photography, Best Shot *remains tense, often exciting and curiously watchable. Perhaps that's because it's not Hollywood, but supported by British finance and the Indiana Film Commission.*

ROGER KEAN 80%



► **Jane Fonda and Jeff Bridges in** *The Morning After*: **did she kill a man the night before?**

THE MORNING AFTER

Guild Home Video 15

WHEN Alex Sternberger (Jane Fonda) suddenly wakes up in a strange bed she's not too surprised. But when she turns over to see a dead man with the handle of a blade protruding from his chest in bed with her, she becomes a bit concerned. Did she really put the knife in this man's chest after *another* heavy night drinking? Or was she conveniently dumped there after suffering another blackout? 'Listen', she says to the limp carcass, 'if I did that to you I didn't mean it . . . I'm not a bad person'. Even so, the alcoholic TV actress is in pretty deep trouble.

So she packs her bags and heads for the airport, forgetting that it's Thanksgiving and all the flights are booked solid. On her way back from the air terminal she bumps into an ex-cop (Jeff Bridges) with a clapped-out '57 Chevrolet, onto whom she eventually unloads all her problems.

But it's strange that an ex-flatfoot should suddenly become interested in her problems and then so willing to solve them. And then there's her husband, Jacky, who suddenly filed for divorce . . . just a few days before the murder. What's behind it all? Did she really kill this stranger in a fit of anger? After all, she has spent three months in prison for attacking her first husband . . . or was she framed?

The story starts off at a fair old pace and does well just to keep ticking at such speed, but what makes *The Morning After* really worth watching is the superbly-crafted ending with more twists than a helping of French fries. Fonda and Bridges make the perfect team and it's *Jagged Edge* all over again, though Bridges is on the other side of the fence this time.

DOMINIC HANDY 88%

The Morning After *has it all: violence, murder, mystery and sex. The plot is well-written but can be hard to follow at times, especially when it seems everybody on the screen is a murderer! Still, the film builds up to a well-thought-out ending.*

NICK ROBERTS 89%

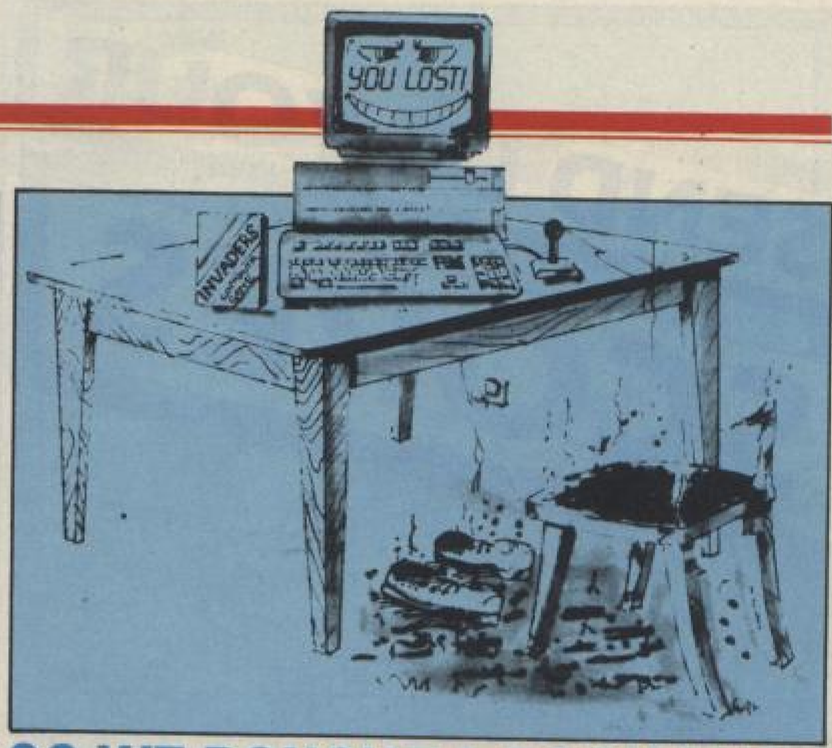
SPECIAL PAPER BAG OFFER

British craftsmanship knows no equal, and it is with pride that CRASH presents a rare opportunity for you and your family to treasure one of the most exquisite gems of these islands – a handcrafted replica of Lloyd Mangram's paper bag, cut from fine brown paper, weathered in the verdant hills of southwest Shropshire, and signed with the traditional marks of the CRASH writers.

This heirloom of future generations is, of course, a strictly limited edition of the highest quality, and only five are available to the lucky Mangramophiles who give the best answers to this single question:

Why does Lloyd wear a paper bag?

Answers on the back of a paper bag or postcard, please, to ***EXCLUSIVE PAPER BAG OFFER, CRASH,*** **PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB** *by Christmas. As ever, the decisions of CRASH's appointed judges are final in all respects, though they can hardly be rational with those paper bags over their heads.*



SO WE BOUGHT A BOOK AND A VIDEO

EVERY MONDAY in July and August Channel 4 broadcast *So We Bought A Computer*, a series of half-hour programmes showing how computers are used today – completely free of jargon!

And now the producer, Yorkshire Television, has published a book and a video of the series.

At just a pound (including postage and packing), the book is packed with useful information for anyone thinking of buying a computer for more than just games-playing, and it'll also be interesting to anyone working with computers.

And if you didn't manage to see the early-evening series, don't give up hope. The video (VHS or Betamax) is available directly from Yorkshire Television, and the price is the only drawback. Your average lad or lass off the street will have to pay £49.93 (including VAT) for the privilege of watching now.

But if you're an educational establishment, as so many of us are, you can buy *So We Bought*... for a mere £29.95 (including VAT). Either way contact Geoff Foster at Yorkshire Television, *The Television Centre, Leeds LS3 1JS.*



► **Ghost of a chance: Software Publishing Associates is giving away 25 Spectrum copies of** *Erik: Phantom of The Opera*, **on its new Crysys label.**

Mark Rivers's game, based on the classic French novel by Gaston Leroux, is advertised by a series of cartoons telling part of the phantom's shocking story. (There's one in this CRASH a few pages back.)

But the ads don't give away the grim conclusion – and the first 25 Spectrum spooks sending in ideas for the ending will receive free copies of the new game, out at the end of November!

You don't have to actually get it right, of course. Just send your suggested ending for the cartoon ads to: Phantom Of The Opera Competition, Software Publishing Associates, ***Lower Ground Floor, 197-199 City Road, London EC1V 1JN.***

SEND US YOUR SCORES

DON'T FORGET – now's your chance to beat the others to it and get your top scores on the latest games into Robin Candy's **SCORES**, the CRASH high-scores section which will be published for the first time in the Christmas Special.

There's no minimum score for entry – **SCORES** will print the highest score we've received for each recent game PLUS a selection of other scores drawn at random. It's a chance to see how you're doing against average players as well as sprite-wielding superheroes!

And each month Robin will pick five winners from all the entries (regardless of their scores and of whether their scores were published): the first one out of the pile wins **£40 worth of software** of his or her choice, plus a CRASH cap and T-shirt; the next four win a CRASH cap and T-shirt each. So don't forget to tell us on the form what software and T-shirt you'd like if you win a prize!

Send this form with your scores for up to three games to: **ROBIN CANDY'S SCORES, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*.** No lying, please – ve haff vays of throwing them out. If you want to prove you've really done it, you can always send a photo or a screen dump of the game showing your score . . .

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

.... **POSTCODE** ....

MY SCORES ARE:

GAME	SCORE	DATE ACHIEVED
1		
2		
3		

IF A WIN TOP PRIZE I WOULD LIKE THIS £40 WORTH OF SOFTWARE:

....

AND IF I WIN ANY PRIZE I WOULD LIKE THIS CRASH T-SHIRT, CHOSEN FROM THOSE ADVERTISED ON PAGES 110-111: ....

....

Some things never change: the decision of CRASH's appointed judges is absolutely final in all respects, and that's settled.

THE NETWORK NEWS

PAUL EVANS sees BBs as a Prestel rival

BULLETIN BOARDS are smaller versions of Prestel, run mostly by amateurs for the fun of it. And most are very good to read. Till a couple of years ago the idea of running a BB on the Spectrum was a joke, but then a bright spark called Nicholas Goodall worked out a way of running a BB on a Spectrum: he found he could transmit viewdata frames from one Spectrum to another, which could in turn respond.

So he set to work and produced Micron V2 (which wasn't very successful), and, after some improvements, Micron V2.3.

Micron allows a hip 'n' trendy Sysop (SYStem OPerator) with Spectrum microdrives and VTX to create a miniature viewdata system – it can have up to 800 pages, if you have eight microdrives. And Micron has nearly all the features of Prestel, including response frames, full routing system, autoupdate pages and dynamic (animated) frames. You can also set up CUGs (Closed User Groups) which have a password system and even telesoftware. The system has two microdrives and comes with a very detailed manual.

BASICALLY SIMPLE

Most of Micron is run in BASIC, mainly so it's easy for the Sysop to make changes. You start off by creating all the frames for the board and set up the routes using the editor program. All the pages are then set up in a machine-code file known called SET.

If you need telesoftware, you can use the TSOFT system to create telesoftware from your own programs. Then you use the Setup program to input information needed like keyword, passwords, and even MBX.

Once this is finished, you load up the TX program, select the time and date and you're off. When the phone rings, press a button and the microdrives zoom into action. The user enters his password and is allowed into your world!

Nicholas Goodall also does a nice line in autoanswer boards (mentioned last time). For around £12 you can get a circuit board which sits in your modem and answers the phone for you, making the system totally automatic – though unfortunately this invalidates the BT approval.

PROBLEMS AND IMPROVEMENTS

As usual, there are drawbacks. Micron isn't a standard system, and accessing it requires special software. That's available on Prestel as free telesoftware offered by Spec-tacular. (It's only been written for Spectrums and Commodores, which limits the scope slightly.)

The biggest problem is speed. Because of the BASIC programs and microdrives it can sometimes take up to a minute to access one page!

Micron V4 is now being written – just as well, because Micron is starting to die out slowly. For information on Micron contact Nick Goodall on Prestel MBX number 108513147.

WHAT TO TRY

If you have the Micron software, try a few of these BBs. My favourite is Livernet, run by Stuart Campbell of *SPECS* fame. It's open every night from 10pm to 7am on 051 546 4640.

Then there's Prestonet, from John Langfield (also of *SPECS*). It's open Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturday from 8pm till 7am and Sunday and Monday 10pm till 7am.

Finally, the oldest Micron BB in the country: Key-Board from Ron Meldrum is open every night from 8pm to 8am. Try that on 0908 668398.

SHADES GETS THINNER

. . . in text, that is. Micronet has transformed its MUD adventure into 80-column mode so more information can be shown onscreen – but just in case you like the old method, 40-column mode will still be available. There'll be more on this in a *Shades* feature nest issue.

BUDGET GAMES GET NETWORKED

BUDGET HOUSES Code Masters and Firebird will make new games available on Micronet for as little as £1.50. Reductions on the telesoftware, which Micronet subscribers can tape off the network, will be up to 25%.

Explaining the setup, Firebird Silver Publisher Chris Smith observed: 'Budget software is an impulse buy and telesoftware is the ideal environment for it.'

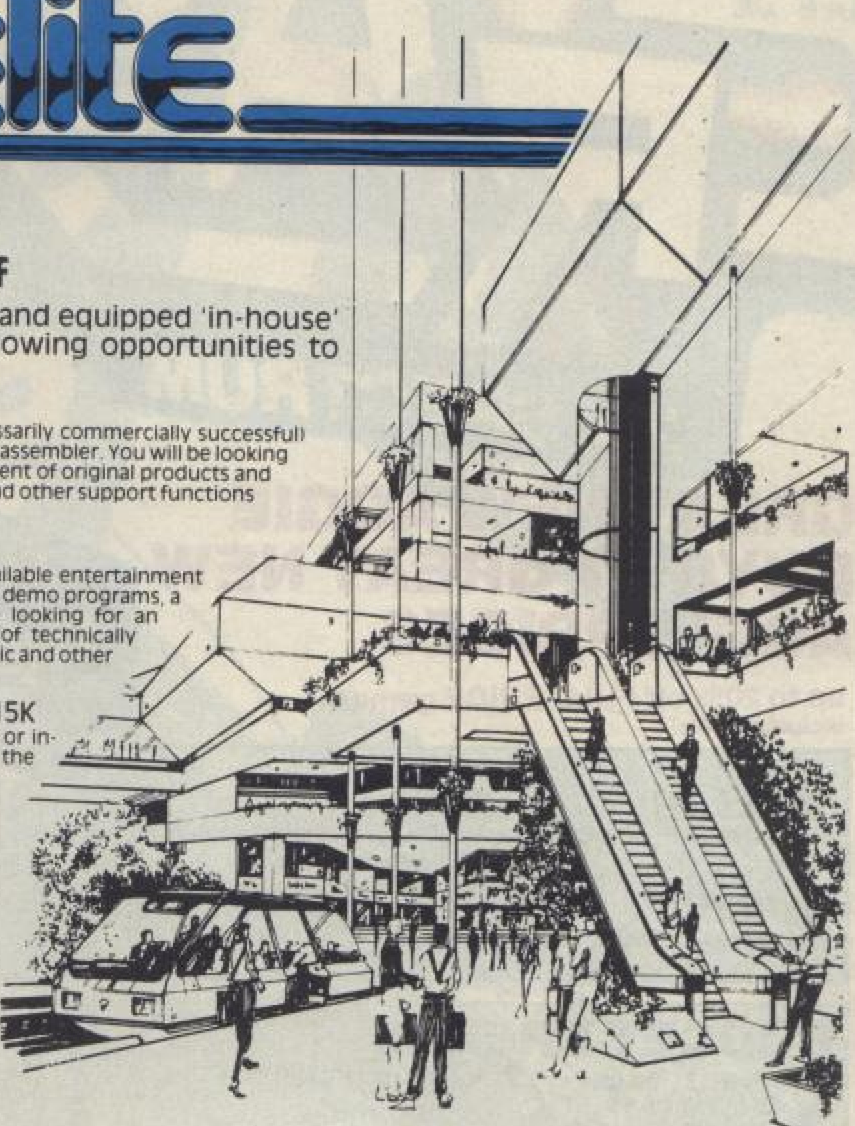
And if the system works, more software houses may work with Micronet – the network's David Rosenbaum says it's 'really acting like any other distributor'.

elite

OPPORTUNITIES

In-House and Free-Lance Technical Staff

Having established the key elements of a well organised and equipped 'in-house' software development team, the company has the following opportunities to offer in Entertainment Software Development.



Senior Programmers – O.T.E. £25K

Having been responsible for at least one technically excellent (though not necessarily commercially successful) entertainment software product you will be experienced in Z80, 6502 and/or 68000 assembler. You will be looking for an opportunity to join an 'in-house' environment committed to the development of original products and conversions of the very highest quality and will expect to call on graphics, music and other support functions of the highest calibre.

Programmers – O.T.E. £15K

Though not necessarily able to show direct involvement in any commercially available entertainment software products, you will be able to demonstrate through specific routines and demo programs, a high degree of technical ability in Z80, 6502 or 68000 assembler. You will be looking for an opportunity to realise your ambition to be responsible for the development of technically excellent entertainment software products and will expect to call on graphics, music and other support functions of the highest calibre.

Graphic Artists/Musicians/Game Designer – O.T.E. £10–£15K

With or without formal qualifications you will already be working in a free-lance or in-house capacity supporting programmers in your specialist discipline in the development of commercially available/to be published entertainment software products. You will be able to demonstrate a number of different examples of your work and will be looking to put your experience to use whilst developing it further in the production of commercially available products.

All appointees to the above positions will be offered an attractive working environment, substantial basic salary and an opportunity to develop their ambitions with the full support of the company's management and financial strength.
In addition to the above opportunities the company has a regular flow of program conversion contracts available at attractive rates to free-lancers and is particularly keen to support proven programmers and development houses wishing to write and have published by a major brand name original games for all popular machines.

If you would like to arrange an interview to discuss any of the above opportunities please write, giving full details of your relevant experience to:

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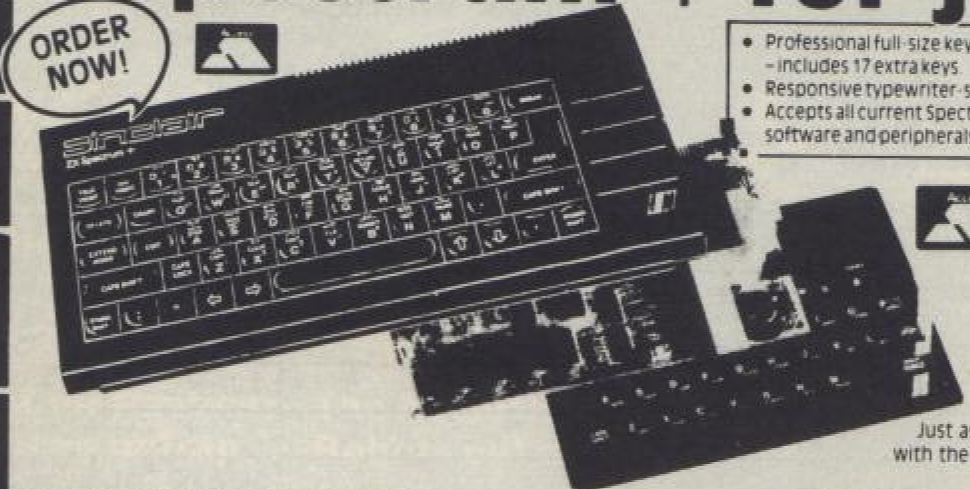
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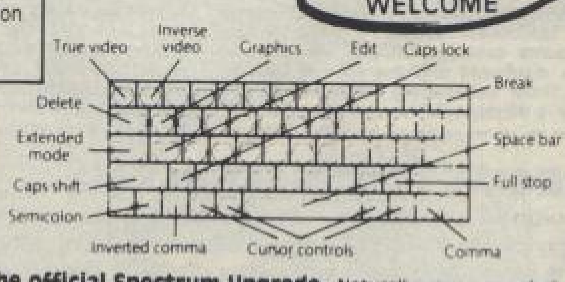
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The games above were reviewed in Issues 43, 44, 45, 46 or 47 of CRASH, and *most* are available, but CRASH cannot guarantee that they are ready yet. If in doubt give Aggie (alias Carol Kinsey) a ring on (0584) 5620 to find out whether the delay will be longer than 28 days.

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WINNERS & PRIZES



ACTION WITH A *MEAN STREAK*

Mirrorsoft's *Mean Streak* can make an action-packed super evening in – but the five top winners of Issue 45's *Mean Streak* comp are even now recovering from a real Super Action Day with Mirrorsoft and CRASH at Kempton Park Racecourse in Surrey.

They're **Martin Faulkner** of Wokingham, Berkshire RG11 4EB; **Guy Keough** of Blackburn, Lancs BB1 9RG; **Justin Cameron** of Knapton, York YO2 6RJ; **A S Forsyth** of Norwich, Norfolk NR4 6UE; and **Tim Genge** of Tickenham, Avon BS21 6RX.

And these 50 runners-up receive *Mean Streak* key fobs to dangle from their belts:

Lee Jaffrey, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 3BW; Paul Morris, Bushey Heath, Herts WD2 1HH; Adrian Shaw, Marlow, Bucks SL7 3BU; Mr D A Z Clarke, Gainsborough, Lincs DN21 4HZ; Scott P Harding, Fareham, Hants PO15 6HJ; Neil Comerford, Coventry, West Midlands CV2 2EP; Miles Willmott, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 2JJ; Daniel Bill, Stanwix, Carlisle CA3 9MS; Stuart Forbes, Newent, Glos GL18 1JT; Matthew Jones, Eastleigh, Hants SO5 7LQ; James Lofthouse, near Selby, North Yorkshire YO8 7UD; Douglas Swanson, Fife, Scotland KY1 2AZ; Darren Clayton, Retford, Notts DN22 0BY; Anil Seth, Wantage, Oxon; David Miller, Paisley, Scotland PA2 7NU; Michael Pini, Basildon, Essex SS13 2AH; L Millea, Garston, Liverpool L19 2PQ; Jonathan Ridenalgh, Markfield, Leics LE6 0SS; John Alexander, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 1LZ; Robert Lines, Gosport, Hants PO12 2QW; Graham Leech, Carlisle, Cumbria CA2 7LZ; Richard Lee, Giffnoik, Glasgow G46 7PB; Andrew Beckett, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 7EZ; John McMunn, Beltra, Co Sligo, Ireland; Michael Lofthouse, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 6BY; Paul Welch, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow, Scotland G69 1HD; Sean Abell, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 8ES; Neil Bradbury, WKSP Reme, BFPO 36; Mr Saleem Siddiqui, Chiswick, London W4 5DH; Neil White, Portobello, Edinburgh EH7 6UG; Roy Asamoah, London SW17 0BT; Chris Gorman, Ayrshire, Scotland KA13 7PN; Daniel Mason, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 6LD; Alasdair Robertson, Perthshire, Scotland FK15 0DZ; David Hurst, Selby, North Yorkshire YO8 9BS; Stephen Pollard, Burnley, Lancs BB10 3NN; Elizabeth Culyer, Mandesley, Norfolk; Scott McGlashan, King's Park, Glasgow G44 4RT; Jamie Freeman, Allerton, Liverpool L19 5NB; Stuart Fraser, Meopham, Kent DA13 0TJ; Stephen Bell, Bilston, West Midlands WV14 6NR; Paul RMorris, Stirlingshire, Scotland FK1 5JR; A Bolton, Guildford, Surrey GU5 0BT; G Panther, Mexborough, S Yorks S64 0JS; Matthew Babirecki, Chesterfield, Derbys S44 5HA; Peter Davies, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 9PE; Ferdose Ahmed, New Southgate, London N11 3BD; Jeremy Doogan, Portadown, Craigavon BT63 5EH; Graham Reid, Fife, Scotland KY2 5AD; Mark Gaches, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 7EF.

I WONNA BERK



Remember that soft 'n' cuddly preview comp from Issue 45? Well, one blue Piranha Berk is going through the trap door to **J M Kitts of Solihull, West Midlands B90 2NS – and the review's on page 12 this issue.**

IMAGINE YOURSELF AT *COMBAT SCHOOL*

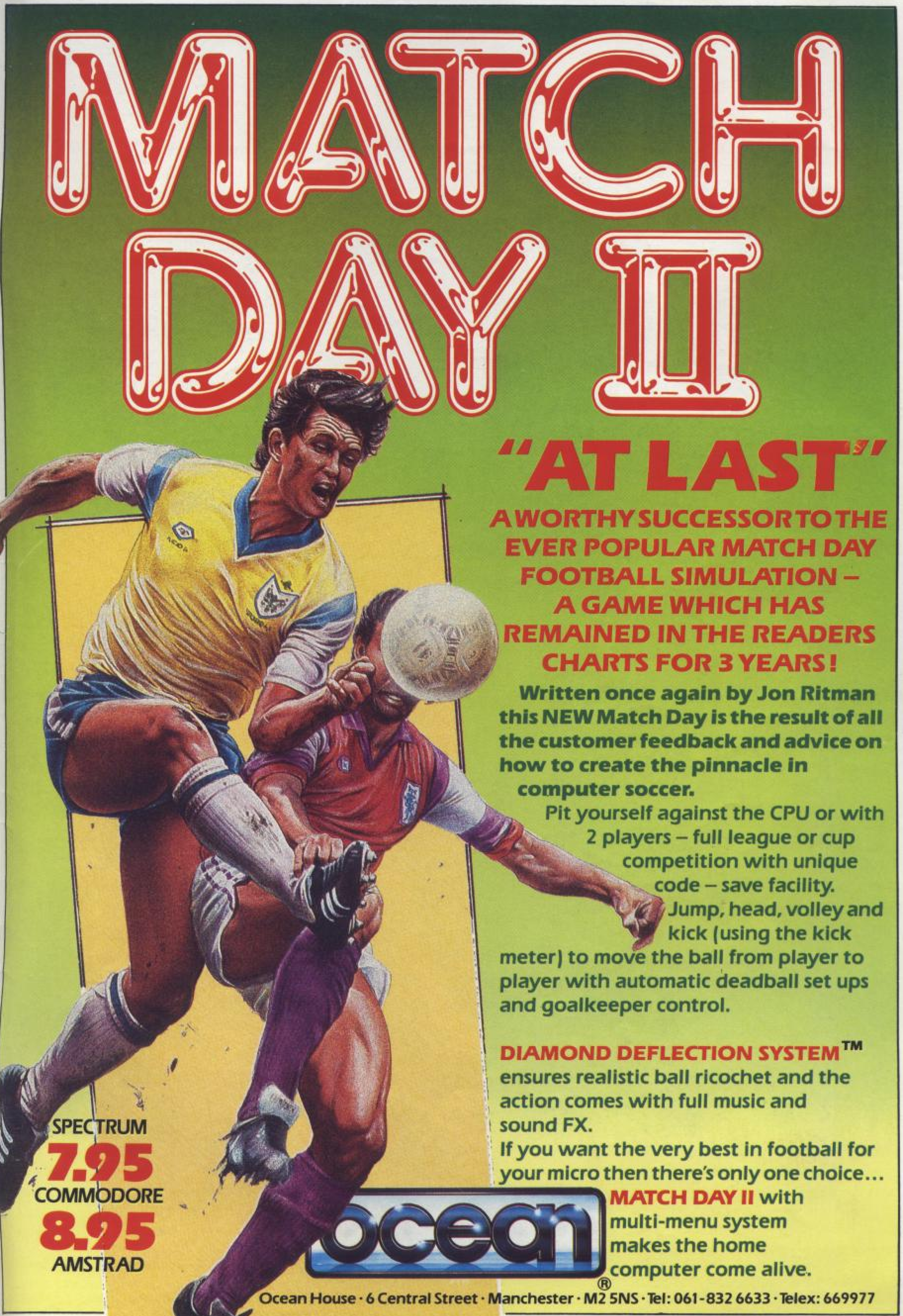
There were thousands of entries for Imagine's Issue 45 *Combat School* comp, answering a few questions on the company's past games. Three winners have gone on an all-expenses-paid trip to Ocean/Imagine's programming fortress in Manchester for a play-off on the Konami coin-op, and the champion will get to take it home! (More news of that next issue.)

The winner also receives a Tatung Einstein monitor, and the two runners-up get the much-coveted Ocean goody bags.

Those three finalists are **Clive Peedel** of Oxford OX2 9HQ; **Mr M Lee** of Sheffield S8 8DA; and **Mr Vinh Quan** of London N1 1TW.

These 20 runners-up receive *Combat School* on the Spectrum (previewed this issue – see page 132):

Mr S D Bowen, Lancashire BL8 1XX; Neil Barrett, Romford, Essex RM3 0ES; Michael Timberlake, Worksop, Notts S81 0XH; Aaron Lewis, Amlwch, Gwynedd LL68 9DU; Thomas R C Deacon, Brentwood, Essex CM5 9AG; Mark Bonnar, Uddingston, Glasgow G71 6AY; Scott Cheetham, By Dundee, Scotland DD5 3PE; John Storey, Wirral, Merseyside L49 6LB; Gary Marr, Parson Cross, Sheffield S5 8RP; Michael Wright, Bloxwich, Walsall WS3 3RJ; David Crozier, Houghton-Le-Spring, Tyne And Wear DH5 9QY; D Bartley, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS8 0RA; Nicholas Lloyd, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 1NU; Christopher Briggs, Batley, West Yorkshire WF17 0NL; Robert Lines, Gosport, Hants PO12 2QW; Lik-Chung Li, Middlesex U65 5HR; Ewen Kinninment, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 3RB; Ben Watson, Woolsington, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE13 8DH; Albert Ho, Liverpool, Merseyside L8 8EN; Philip Dawson, Spalding, Lincs PE11 2SN.


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